# POEMS

BY

# BARON HALLER.

THE

# POEMS

OF

# BARON HALLER,

TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH

BY

*Mrs. HOWORTH.*

*LONDON:*

PRINTED FOR J. BELL,

NO. 148, OXFORD-STREET, OPPOSITE BOND-STREET.

1794.

46.
9. 4.
607.

TO

# J. E. SMITH, M. D. F. R. S.

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ACADEMIES OF TURIN, UPSAL, STOCKHOLM, LISBON, &c. &c. PRESIDENT OF THE LINNEAN SOCIETY.

DEAR SIR,

IN dedicating to you a Tranſlation from Baron Haller, I cannot help feeling there is peculiar propriety. Thoſe who are converſant with this author's ſcientific works will obſerve the reſemblance which your ſtudies bear to his, and the congenial ardour with which you purſue them: while



thoſe

thoſe among your acquaintance who trace in Haller's Poems his peculiar character, will ſcarcely fail to recollect the ſimilarity of yours, while they contemplate his liberal and enquiring ſpirit, the purity of his moral taſte, and, above all, thoſe amiable affections which lead us to believe that the *man* was not leſs beloved in private life than the philoſopher was eſteemed in the world of ſcience.

Happy is that ſtudious and rational taſte which directs you to employ the noon of life in acquirements which ſhall enrich its decline; but far happier that caſt of temper and of manners, which muſt lead all thoſe who are emulous of ſuch acquirements to wiſh that the *converſation* of their poſſeſſor ſhould be the medium of inſtruction.

Long,

Long, dear Sir, may you enjoy thoſe ſocial pleaſures which you are ſo eminently qualified to heighten and to extend; and may every ſucceſs await the progreſs of thoſe ſtudies which afford ſo delightful an occupation to your own mind, and ſo valuable an acquiſition to the world of letters! Such is the ſincere wiſh of her who offers you this Engliſh verſion of Baron Haller's Poems, as a tribute of eſteem and friendſhip.

J. H.

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POEMS,

# POEMS, &c.

BY

## BARON HALLER.

## MORNING.

DAY's empire comes! The planet of the night
In weſtern waters hides her beamy hair;
The glittering hoſt of ſtars withdraw their light,
And ſhadowy miſts retire from earth and air.

O'er eaſtern hills th' approaching Morn is ſeen;
To light, and life, and joy all nature wakes;
The ſpreading ray illumes the duſky green,
And tints the ſky with gold and ſapphire flakes.

The ſweet Aurora, queen of dawning light,
Throws gracious glances on the earth around:
She ſmiles, and the pale legions of the Night
Fly at the roſeate beams with which her ſmiles are crown'd.

The Sun, advancing in his glorious way,
Riſes majeſtic o'er the mountain's brow;
Reflecting clouds his ruby fire diſplay,
And ſtreams of gold upon the landſcape flow.

To Phœbus' gaze the opening buds exhale
Their glittering dew-drops and their virgin bloom;
While the pure lily of the lowly vale
Breathes from its ſatin'd leaves a rich perfume.

The ruſtic ſeizes his laborious car,
Singing the joy which ſprings within his heart;
He ploughs his furrows, while to earth and air
The light birds all their melody impart.

Father of beings, Lord of heav'n and earth,
All that I ſee thy powerful hand has form'd;
To all thy univerſal love gave birth,
And all thy vivifying breath has warm'd.

The Stars, which move thro' air in light array'd;
Thoſe genial beams, which o'er the cheriſh'd land
Spread the full heat of day, by thee are made,
They bear the deep impreſſion of thy hand.

The

The Moon thou clotheſt in her lambent light,
And lendeſt wings to the ſtrong winds of heav'n;
Thou ſheddeſt on our earth the dews of night,
And to the planets haſt their ſtations giv'n.

From clay and duſt the mountains thou haſt made;
From arid ſands the metals thou haſt preſt;
The vaulted firmament thy hand has laid,
And habited with clouds as with a veſt.

The wide-extended brilliant vault of ſky
Thy hand ſuſtains upon the void profound;
From nothing call'd thy voice of majeſty
This univerſe extended without bound.

Thy works how ſhall created beings know,
Works infinite in pow'r and harmony!
From ſource eternal their due praiſe muſt flow;
Who counts them muſt be infinite like thee.

How excellent! But what avails to hear
A mortal's praiſe, O thou ſole Lord of heav'n!
Thy greatneſs blinds! I ſtop in my low ſphere,
And ſerve thee with the ſoul that thou haſt giv'n.

## *THE DESIRE*

OF

### RE-VISITING ONE'S NATIVE COUNTRY.

DEAR groves, where mountain zephyrs breathe,
Whoſe foliage, all of ſhadowy brown,
Winding in many a tangled wreath
The heights of *Haſel* graceful crown;

O when, beneath your friendly ſhade,
Shall I again thoſe accents hear
Which Philomel, of day afraid,
In twilight pours upon the ear?

There ſolitude calm leiſure gives,
And ſilence holds unbounded ſway,
Save only when the trembling leaves
With the light zephyr gently play:

There too my artleſs verſe I wove
(A heart-felt ſtrain remember'd well)
For her who with the ſighs of love
Firſt taught my youthful breaſt to ſwell.

On thoſe ſmooth banks, to fancy dear,
O let me once again repoſe,
And watch the infant flow'rets peer
Thro' the green carpet Nature throws;

And let me breathe once more the air
Pregnate with *Haſel's* laviſh greens:
Ye cultur'd fields, ye meadows fair,
My heart ſtill lingers in your ſcenes;

Still fondly does it hover round
Thoſe green receſſes where Sol's ray
Has never pierc'd, whoſe calm profound
Chaſes remember'd griefs away.

But here what ſad reverſe I find!—
By deep-felt woes and cares bow'd down,
My ſinking over-clouded mind
To peace and gladneſs is unknown:

Far from that dear regretted land
Where firſt I drew the breath of life,
No kind friend leads me by the hand
Thro' paths of peril and of ſtrife:

To dangerous freedom wholly left,
A wanderer thro' the world I go;
Of friendly counſel I 'm bereft
Ere I have learn'd myſelf to know.

Sad languors thro' my whole frame ſpread,
And penetrate my ſoul within;
Ambition, joy, and hope are dead;
Diſcouragement ſucceeds chagrin.

* Now the ſtrong ſea impetuous calls
Its waves o'er ruin'd mounds to ſpring,
Threat'ning within our tott'ring walls
Inevitable death to bring:

And now th' approaching noiſe of war,
Mingling with thunders and with floods,
Announces to th' aſtoniſh'd ear
A fire which deep in aſhes broods.

Take courage: all things have their term:
By raging, ſtorms their fury ſpend:
Paſt ills, ſuſtain'd with ſpirit firm,
More joy to preſent good ſhall lend.

The haggard wretch, to want a prey,
Is bleſt in taſting plenty's balm:
Time on ſwift wings bears grief away,
And ſwift returns with welcome calm.

* The author here refers to the inundation of the ſea, and the burſting of a dyke, both of which are frequent in the winter at Amſterdam, from whence he is ſuppoſed to write this poem. The Dutch were upon the eve of a war at the time he writes.

Oh,

Oh, then perhaps I yet may hope
Once more my native air to breathe,
To ſit on *Haſel's* verdant ſlope,
Its crowning woods of beech beneath;

In tranquil ſolitude to hear
The warblings of the linnet float
'Mid trembling leaves, while thro' the air
Echo reverb'rates the ſweet note.

Oh, flouriſh then, ye fields of gold!
Your ripen'd grains, your flow'rets ſtore
Till I dear *Haſel's* woods behold
To quit their welcome ſhade no more.

---

## DORIS.

NOW falls the ſplendour of the day!
In the weſt a vapour grey
Succeeds the clouds of glowing red
Which Phœbus' parting glance had ſpread.
The Moon, of eaſtern waves new-born,
Shews on high her ſilver'd horn,

And beneath her doubtful light
Sheds the ſober-mantled Night
Her poppies, and her pearly dew,
Exhauſted nature to renew.
Come forth, O Doris, lovely maid!
Here let us ſeek the beechen ſhade.
Soft Zephyrus' careſſing gale
Calls us to this hidden vale,
Where its breathings, full of love,
Softly through the light leaves move.
Deep ſhades (of Night the ſolemn ſtole)
To that ſweet ſtate invite the ſoul
Where, of herſelf alone delighted,
All mortal cares and pleaſures ſlighted,
Amid thoſe thoughts ſhe deep retires
Which the ſurrounding ſcene inſpires.
O Doris with the beaming eyes,
Feel'ſt thou in thy boſom riſe
Emotions new, in gentle war,
Than pleaſure more delicious far?
In this hour of nameleſs bliſs,
Why, wh , my Doris, aſk I this?
Thy radiant glances turn'd aſide,
The blood which flows in hurried tide
Thy breaſt of innocence to ſwell,
Shew more than all thy words could tell.
Feelings ſcarcely underſtood
Wrap thee in incertitude:
"What can this new emotion be?"
Ah, ſweet girl! thou loveſt me.

Why may I not, uncheck'd by fear,
Utter to thee a truth ſo dear,
Since all my ſoul, of thy ſoul charm'd,
Is with an equal paſſion warm'd?
What thought thy ſpotleſs breaſt inſpires?
Within herſelf my love retires,
And bluſhes, all her heart revealing,
Vary like its inward feeling.
Why ſhould thy troubled ſpirit prove
Doubts that reſiſt the power of love,
When thy heart, inform'd by Heaven,
Conſents to wiſhes Heaven has given?
Quit this fear which clouds thine eye;
Yield to thy fair deſtiny,
Where unfailing love and pleaſure
Strew their gifts ſurpaſſing meaſure.
Doris, our faith this moment bleſſes;
Doubt itſelf thy choice confeſſes.
Ah me! that tint of budding roſes
Which thy youthful cheek diſcloſes,
Thy breath, which honey-bees would ſip,
Thoſe ſmiles which play upon thy lip
(Smiles that ſuch magic charms diſpenſe),
Dwell not with cold Indifference;
And thoſe eye-beams could only dart
All living from the inſpired heart.
Doris, it is Love's decree,
That the pow'r beſtow'd on thee,
To draw all hearts by magic ſpell
Where beautiful affections dwell,

Should within thyſelf inſpire
That ſoft force, that trembling fire,
Which moſt empow'rs the ſoul to prove
The nameleſs ſentiments of love.
What ſhould my lovely Doris dread?
Leave Shame with Vice to hide her head:
Their habitation far above
Dwells the winged god of love.
See, thy companions on the plain
Delighted live beneath his reign.
Love ſails aloft, and, looking down,
Gilds with his glance their hamlets brown,
Which to ſuch happineſs gives birth,
That heaven itſelf is ſeen on earth.
O Doris, in this joyful hour,
When thy whole ſoul yields to the pow'r
Of new-born paſſion, and in me
Paſſion congenial anſwers thee,
All enamour'd of thy ſtate,
Would'ſt thou not recall from fate
Days that have paſs'd unknown to bliſs,
Loſt in thy heart's idleneſs?
O Doris, give thyſelf to me,
Who henceforth only live for thee!
Reaſon, with eyes of temper'd fire,
Shall bleſs the beating heart's deſire;
And with wreaths from myrtle groves
Virtue ſhall crown the faith ſhe loves.
O then, beyond all thought or meaſure,
Sweet th' intoxicating pleaſure

Of quarrels feign'd, that well expreſs
Love's delightful playfulneſs,
Oft varying, in capricious folly,
To fancies of deep melancholy,
Till, in our ſouls enchantment thrilling,
And a delirious ſoftneſs filling,
In me thy ſmiles, and ſighs, and tears
Create new wiſhes and new fears.
But, oh, how vain in words to tell
Thoſe tranſports which the full heart ſwell
In ſuch intoxicating bliſs,
Such pure delicious tenderneſs!
Oh, vain indeed are words to tell
Thoſe tranſports which the full heart ſwell!
Itſelf, while wrapp'd in mortal chain,
Scarcely can ſuch bliſs ſuſtain.
O Doris with the beaming eyes,
How ſweetly ſpeak thoſe riſing ſighs!
Of thy voice the melting tone
Tells me thy ſoul is all my own:
And have my words had pow'r to prove
What countleſs charms exiſt in love?
Oh, if Love's image can excite
Such quick emotions of delight,
What in his own divinity
Will be his influence o'er thee?
Sweet girl! in bliſs oh haſte to ſhare;
Be not unuſefully ſo fair:
Say not that Love has griefs and fears;
Joy mingles ever with his tears:

'Tis

'Tis ſweeter far with Love to weep,
Than with Indifference to ſleep.
Thy influence o'er a lover's mind,
Accompliſh'd girl! is not confin'd
To that ſhort period when the grace
Of early youth illumes the face.
In youth, in age, thy charms prevailing
Muſt reign with influence unfailing:
Virtue firmly ties the band
Which Beauty with her graceful hand
All around the yielding mind
In many an artful wreath had twin'd.
That general love thy charms awake
Gives thee a right thy choice to make
From all the youth; and well I ſee
This happy choice muſt fall on me:
For, O my Doris, thou ſhalt find
In me alone thy kindred mind.
Let others boaſt of titles vain,
Or tell their love in artful ſtrain:
I, beauteous Doris, for my part
Can only offer thee a heart;
And that I offer as 'twas given
To me by all-diſpoſing Heaven.
Doris, diſtruſt th' admiring throng;
How often dwell upon their tongue
Words full of fire, while of their ſoul
Icy coldneſs fills the whole!
Some, blinded by thy peerleſs charms,
For pride will woo thee to their arms:

Others will gaze upon thy face,
Enamour'd of its youthful grace,
Behold thy glowing bluſhes riſe,
And catch the ſparkles from thine eyes,
Yet ſee not all thoſe rays divine
Which amid ſmiles and dimples ſhine;
Thoſe meanings which inform the whole,
And to each fibre give a ſoul.
I love thee, Doris, as they lov'd
Ere feigned ſighs the breaſt had mov'd:
Although, by magic drawn, mine eye
Is fix'd on thee unceaſingly,
All which makes thee ſo admir'd
I forget; my thoughts retir'd
One ſentiment alone can prove,
A wiſh unbounded for thy love.
I try not in ſome ſonnet quaint
My paſſion artfully to paint,
Nor call thee of celeſtial birth,
A goddeſs viſiting the earth:
Oh, no: Humanity's ſweet veſt
Becomes my lovely Doris beſt.
O Doris with the beaming eyes,
Requite with love my heart-felt ſighs;
Do juſtice to my tenderneſs,
Let one ſweet word my paſſion bleſs!
Oh, if a love reſpectful, warm,
Full of faith, thy ſoul can charm;
And if alone thy heart thou 'lt give
Where its like affections live,

Then are all my wiſhes bleſt;
Of Doris' ſelf I 'm now poſſeſt.
What mean thine eyes withdrawn from ſight,
Veiling beneath fair lids their light?
O dull of heart! not to divine
What thy ſoul would ſay to mine,
While thoſe ſighs thy boſom move,
Whiſpering the conſent of love!

---

## VIRTUE.

VIRTUE, my friend, is not an empty name;
Its ſeed divine grows in our inmoſt hearts:
From God's *own* pow'r proceeds that light'ning flame
Which fires high hills, and through the welkin darts.

Let the raſh atheiſt brave Heav'n's majeſty;
By vice, not reaſon, ſuch vain thoughts are held;
Men ſeek for doctrines which may ſet them free
From duties too conſtraining if fulfill'd.

Oh,

Oh, no: it is not pride which ſelf-love gives,
'Tis an intelligence by Heaven beſtow'd,
Which makes us clearly know that Virtue lives,
And ſeeks her native excellence in God.

Would vile diſſimulation make us ſtem
Anger's ſtrong tide when all our feelings move
To rage? when wiſdom diſapproves the flame,
Inſtruct us to ſubdue a heart-felt love?

Could frigid apathy impel the ſage
In lonely bondage virtue to maintain?
To wait (while no kind balms his grief aſſuage)
The ſlow approaches of a death of pain?

Doth whimſical caprice two friends unite
So that the one within the other lives,
Impetuous throws himſelf amidſt the fight,
And his own life to ſave his brother gives?

Did vanity the heart of Titus warm
With that benevolence which knew no bounds,
Which to th' unhappy held its ſuccouring arm,
Wept for their tears, and bled for all their wounds?

E'en the light ſpirits of unripen'd age,
'Midſt their unconquer'd petulance, admire,
In the true greatneſs of the long-tried ſage,
Virtue's own image and her native fire.

To vice, 'tis true, proſperity is given,
And avarice graſps the riches of the earth;
Flattery ſurpriſes favours; but high Heav'n
Preſerves thoſe hearts where its own truth has birth.

Meek piety, contented, lives unknown:
Wiſdom is valued by the ſtupid crowd
As, in thoſe lands where ſcience never ſhone,
Pearls, which unheeded all their glory ſhroud.

Virtue alone creates unfailing peace:
From vice, repentance and diſguſt are born;
And glittering crowns the weary head oppreſs;
And glory fades ere its prime flow'rs are worn.

O Virtue, in thyſelf thou beareſt heav'n.
My much-lov'd friend, if in this world below
Grief to the righteous heart is often giv'n,
Wrapt in ourſelves let us ſuſtain the blow.

Pleaſure and pain the ſage ſuit equally:
Each ſtate his native virtue grateful makes;
'Tis true he cannot fix his deſtiny,
But from adverſity he profit takes.

In his integrity ſublimely bold,
He fears not that which weaker mortals dread
With an unalter'd brow he could behold
The thunderbolt deſcending on his head.

THE

## THE ALPS.

IN vain, O mortals, do ye exhauſt the gifts of nature and the reſources of art to multiply your enjoyments. Proceed in your luxurious inventions; enliven your blooming parterres with ſparkling water-falls; make huge rocks ſubmit to Corinthian elegance; furniſh your marble halls from the looms of Perſia; ſearch China for birds' neſts, and receive them from diſhes of gold, while the waſted pearl flows from an emerald goblet; let the moſt melodious concerts invite you to ſlumber, and the voice of the trumpet awaken you; ſay to the mountains, "Be ye removed," and wrench whole provinces from the hand of induſtry to extend the circuit of your parks. Though fate itſelf ſhould accede to all your deſires, you will find yourſelves poor in the midſt of grandeur, and miſerable in the boſom of riches.

The happineſs of the ſoul muſt originate in itſelf: the gifts of fortune are neither a certain ſource of pleaſure, nor a ſhelter againſt vexation. The moſt frugal repaſt will be delicious to a ſimple ſhepherd,

while diſguſt preſides at the feſtivals of the rich. In this reſpect, has the prince any advantage over the unlettered ruſtic? The ſceptre tires ſooner than the ſheep-hook. Woe to the prince who is miſled by avarice or ambition! his ſurrounding guards cannot ſhelter him from the torments they inflict: but when peace reigns in the ſoul, no need of downy beds to create a delightful repoſe.

O happy golden age, gift of ſupreme goodneſs, why wert thou loſt ſo ſoon? I regret not that perpetual ſpring which adorned the new-created world; thoſe ever-blooming flowers which the north-wind ſpared; thoſe golden harveſts which the fields ſpontaneouſly yielded; thoſe rivers flowing with milk and honey; thoſe peaceful times when the fierce lion ſpread no alarm among the timid flocks; when the ſtrayed lamb ſlept ſecurely among the wolves: no, I regret not the loſs of theſe pleaſures; I deplore the miſeries of man! Alas, man is no longer that wiſe and innocent being who, inſenſible to adventitious wants, uſed the rich gifts of nature with thankfulneſs and joy!

Ye choſen few, who open your hearts to the precepts of nature, the golden age ſtill flouriſhes for you. Virtue inſtructs you to find amuſement in labour, and happineſs in poverty: ſhe lifts you above the vanities of the world. It is true you enjoy not the climate of the celebrated Tempe; the clouds which water your lands are laden with ſnow or thunder; a long winter intrudes on your timid ſprings; and your valleys are ſurrounded with eternal ice: but the purity of your manners

manners compenſates the injuſtice of fate, and the ſeverity of the elements turns to your advantage.

O happy people! be thankful that fate has denied you ſuperfluity, that ſource of every vice. Poverty itſelf offers competence to the man of moderate deſires, but the moſt ſplendid fortune is ruined by the extravagance of luxury. When Rome counted her victories by the number of her battles, a meſs of pottage was the food of her heroes, and her gods dwelt in temples of wood; but when her luxury and riches were unlimited, the weakeſt enemy inſulted her baſe pride. Ye natives of the Alpine hills, beware of deſiring a more ſplendid deſtiny: your happineſs and your ſimplicity of manners ſhall have an equal duration.

Nature has allotted you a rugged and ſtony ſoil; but your labour renders it fruitful: the boſom of your mountains produces only the coarſeſt iron: how happy for the Peruvians had their mines been equally indigent! Liberty ſpreads an univerſal charm: the very rocks bloſſom beneath her ſmile, and ſhe tempers the north wind's blaſt.

O favoured people, who poſſeſs not the dangerous gift of riches, how much more deſirable is your tranquil poverty! Harmony reigns in your ſouls, for Prejudice, with Pride and Diſcord in her train, has there found no place. Your enjoyments are undiſturbed by uneaſy expectations: you love life, without fearing death. Reaſon and Nature are your law-givers; they inſtruct you to ſeek the neceſſary only, and to regard ſuperfluity as burdenſome: thus, without ſtudy or effort,

effort, you follow the precepts of Seneca and the example of Epictetus.

You are unacquainted with thoſe empty diſtinctions which human pride has invented for the purpoſe of ſubjugating virtue and of ennobling vice. The wearineſs of idleneſs never prolongs your hours: labour occupies the day, and calm repoſe ſhortens the night. Among you we find no haughty ſpirits who devote their hearts to ambition; among you we ſee not the joy of to-day repreſſed by anxious cares for to-morrow. Liberty preſerves an equal balance between the poſſeſſions of all your citizens: you enjoy the gifts of Nature, and are thankful to Providence.

Among you, it is true, no honour is affixed to voluminous erudition: you bind not Reaſon in chains according to the maxims of the ſchools: you neither trace with laborious curioſity the great roads of Athens and of Rome, nor do you preſcribe to the ſun his orbit. Vain ſcience, thou favourite amuſement of the ſage, what real contentment haſt thou ever procured him? Thou exciteſt his deſires without teaching him to vanquiſh them; and, by too exquiſitely refining his taſte, thou rendereſt his lot inſipid: he learns the ſyſtem of the univerſe, and dies in ignorance of himſelf. In theſe regions of happineſs and ſimplicity, nature has impreſſed on the heart, not on the brain, a knowledge of the true value of life.

Capricious accidents mark not among you the progreſs of time; nor do tears obliterate the traces of a momentary joy: life proceeds in an unalterable calm:

every day is equal; the future ſhall be like the paſt: no unexpected misfortune, no ſudden elevation perpetuates the remembrance of happy or unhappy days. Life has but two epochs, birth and death, ſave only a few moments of innocent enjoyment, ſtolen, not without difficulty, from the labours of an indefatigable people.

Soon as the ſmile of ſpring ſoftens the voice of the winds, and livelier ſpirits animate the impetuous youth, we ſee a whole hamlet aſſembled beneath the ſpreading ſhade of oaks. How feſtive the ſight of their rural paſtime! how pleaſant to behold dexterity and grace crowned by the ſmiles of love! Here two athletics exerciſe in wreſtling: body to body, they entwine, they cloſe, and mingle in their ſport all the parade of a ſerious combat: farther off, a ponderous ſtone, thrown by a vigorous hand, flies through the air, and attains the deſired mark; while a youth, whom joy invites to nobler enterpriſes, advances towards the gay band of maidens.

Behold the variety of their ſports! The rapid ſhot flies through the air, and hits the deſtined mark, while the fire which impelled it glances before the eye: the bowl, thrown by a ſkilful hand, runs an unerring courſe to its ordered limit, whilſt a circle of young dancers beat the turf to the ſound of the hautboy. Though art has not inſtructed them in meaſure, joy lends them wings. Their aged parents ſeat themſelves around, to partake in full enjoyment the amuſement of their children.

Among men who obey the ſimple laws of nature,

Love's

Love's ſweet empire is not confined by rugged authority. They bluſh not at being attracted by an amiable object; merit ſuperſedes every thing, and Love makes all his ſubjects equal. Even amid poverty they ſacrifice to the Graces. Riches purchaſe not favour; Ambition never ſeparates thoſe whom Love had joined; nor does it unite the deſtiny of thoſe whoſe hearts are repugnant. Love triumphantly diſplays his torch, fearleſs of diſappointment, and regardleſs of all intereſts but his own.

When a young ſhepherd feels that gentle flame which a tender glance eaſily kindles in a lively and ſuſceptible ſoul, he fears not to avow his ſentiments to the object of them: ſhe liſtens; and if his love merit a return, ſhe acknowledges all ſhe feels, and acts according to her wiſhes. A tender inclination is here no diſparagement to the dignity of the fair, if its ſource be in natural graces, and if it be ſanctified by virtue. Unknown among theſe happy people are the grimaces of falſe delicacy, vile apes of purity, which Pride invented for our torment.

Gifted with true wiſdom, you diſown the fantaſtic wants of luxury, which burden the nuptial union with a thouſand cares. Your marriages have no other vouchers than the good faith of the parties: a conſenting word ſtands in place of the moſt ſolemn promiſe, and a kiſs puts the ſeal. The nightingale chants your epithalamium from a neighbouring thicket; pure Pleaſure prepares your couch upon the tender moſs; and with no witneſs but Solitude, Love conducts the bride

bride to the arms of her ſhepherd. O happy couple, what charms can love ſhed upon the ſimple turf, denied to the ſilken couch of luxury!

What need of vigilant inſpectors to preſerve unblemiſhed your nuptial fidelity? Modeſty and Reaſon are your guardians. No vain curioſity leads you to forbidden pleaſures. Enjoyment cools not that mutual affection which diffuſes a charm over the moſt laborious duties that relate to the beloved object. How much more expreſſive is the childiſh ſimplicity of your diſcourſe, than thoſe ſtudied witticiſms in which the heart is ſilent! Gaiety, and a deſire to pleaſe, ſweet handmaids of Concord, animate your careſſes, and ſtrengthen your mutual attachment.

Far from the ſlavery of buſineſs, far from the ſmoky air of cities, 'tis in the boſom of theſe mountains that we muſt ſeek real tranquillity of ſoul. Labour ſtrengthens the bodies of the inhabitants, enlivens their minds, and calms their paſſions, while health and joy render that labour eaſy. The pure blood that runs in their veins is inherited from parents whoſe life has been pure as their own.

See how the northern winds retire, and yield to genial gales the empire of the air: the new ſap riſes in every plant, and the earth, cheriſhed beneath the odorous wing of Zephyrus, decks herſelf with the flowers which he ſheds upon her boſom. Now the inhabitant of the Alps leaves the melancholy vales where the troubled waters announce the melting of the ſnow; he gains the ſummit of the mountains, and meets the infant

infant flowers peering through thin coverings of flaky ice. Then he liberates his flocks from their ſtables, and gladly do they re-enter thoſe cheerful meadows which nature and the ſpring have dreſſed up for their enjoyment.

When the lark announces the approach of morning, as its glance kindles in the eaſtern clouds, the ſhepherd quits the arms of his love, who ſeeks not to delay a departure which her heart permits unwillingly: the lowing cattle haſten in troops towards the meadows, where every blade glitters with the morning dew: ſoon they diſperſe over the level green, following the tufts of bloſſomed clover, which they browſe as they ſlowly move along. Behold the ſhepherd watching this numerous flock, while, ſeated by a water-fall, he makes the ſhrill echo anſwer to his horn.

When the rays of evening lengthen the ſhadows, and the ſun, fatigued with his courſe, ſeeks repoſe in the cool weſtern air, the flocks, ſatisfied with a plenteous repaſt, return to their well-known ſhelter. The huſband and wife meet with reciprocal joy, while a lovely group of children play around them; and when the heifers have yielded their ſweet milk, the whole family, aſſembled in perfect harmony, ſhare a repaſt ſeaſoned by hunger alone; till at length, with ſpirits wrapped in ſweet tranquillity, the happy couple yield to the charms of ſleep in each other's arms.

When the rays of ſummer illumine the fields, and the ripened vegetation fulfils the hopes of the people, the ſhepherd flies to the dewy valley ere the ſun darts his

his beams upon the ſummit of the rocks. The empire of the lovely Flora is invaded; the mower's ſcythe deſpoils the earth of her fair veſtment, and the heaps of freſh-cut herbage ſend forth a perfume of mingled odours. A cheerful ſong accompanies the movement of the oxen, who, with heavy ſteps, draw along their winter proviſion.

When Autumn enwraps the ſky in her vapoury robe, and the withered leaves drop from the ſpray, the earth is covered with treaſures more uſeful than thoſe of Flora: the pleaſures of Spring give place to more ſolid benefits; fruits glow where the beauty of the bloſſom is faded: golden apples, varied with purple ſtreaks, bend down the laden branches; melting pears and blooming plums invite the hand to gather them.

O fortunate hills, that Bacchus crowns not with his purple cluſters! O happy people, to whom nature denies that fermenting juice which produces a thouſand miſeries, and ſometimes levels man with the brutes! ſlake your thirſt at the pure ſtream of your fountains, and be thankful to your deſtiny, which, in depriving you of wine, has cloſed a wide path to deſtruction.

Even upon the ſummit of the Alps, man uſes his artifice and addreſs to appropriate to himſelf all the gifts of nature. When the morning tints ſhine through the deſcending miſts of autumn, the ſound of the hunter's horn is heard through the winding of the rocks. Here a rapid ſhot ſtops the ſwift courſe of the roe; there a fainting deer yields to her purſuers; and ſee the light *chamois*, winged by fear, leaping the precipices

among the pointed rocks, and eluding the ſwiftneſs of the hunters. The vales and foreſts (favourite reſidence of theſe timid animals) now ring with the voices of their purſuers.

The provident inhabitants of the Alps derive a reſource for the neceſſities of winter from the milk of their flocks. The cream, thickened by heat, affords a preſent nouriſhing repaſt; and the remaining parts of the milk, ſeparated by a fermenting acid, yield the curd, which, with due preparation, is ſo valuable a ſtore. The whole family is earneſt to ſhare in the common labour; each would bluſh to be exempt; for idleneſs is to them the worſt of ſlaveries.

When the earth is bound in ſolid froſt; when the valleys are filled with ice, and the mountains covered with ſnow; when cryſtal bars arreſt the courſe of the rivers, and exhauſted Nature renovates her ſtrength by the winter's univerſal repoſe; then the ſhepherd retires into his cottage, whoſe roof, though wrapped in hoar froſt and black with the ſmoke of the fire, yields him a ſweet repoſe, which his paſt fatigues heighten into luxury: his days glide away in ſocial gaiety; a circle of neighbours aſſemble round his fire, and from their converſation the ſage might derive knowledge.

One teaches the art of reading in the vaſt book of nature, and of foretelling the weather by the appearance of the clouds: he knows the direction of the winds, and prognoſticates the gathering ſtorm in the ſtillneſs of a calm: he beholds the tempeſt forming in the diſtant horizon; and when early miſts ſtand thick upon the

the mountains, he knows their effect upon the enſuing day. He underſtands the influence of the moon, and all ſhe indicates by her varying hues. In the early ſpring he can calculate the product of the harveſt; and when others haſten to the reaping, he ſuſpends his labour to avoid the rain he foreſees. He is the oracle of the hamlet; his opinion determines their proceedings: in him experience ſuperſedes the uſe of books.

Behold that young ſhepherd! how joyfully he tunes his harp to the new ſong he has compoſed! Love and Nature kindle the pure flame which burns within him: Art has no ſhare in his paſtorals: his notes conform to the ſimplicity of his ſtation, and his ſong depicts his character. In his verſes he never wanders from his flock, and his muſe ſings only of his ſhepherdeſs: he conſults his heart, which the charms of his love inſpire; he derives expreſſion from ſentiment, and needs not the ſtudied harmony of words.

An old man, whoſe venerable looks add an intereſt to all he utters, deſcribes the battles he has ſeen, counts the colours which were borne away, marks the trenches where the enemy retired, and repeats the name of each ſeveral engagement. Our grandfathers formerly bore witneſs to his valour: the weight of a whole century has bowed down his body, and elevated his ſoul: he is the living image of his anceſtors, whoſe arms wielded thunder, and who bore their God in their boſoms. The young men liſten to him with aſtoniſhment, and diſcover by their geſtures a noble emulation even to ſurpaſs his deeds.

That man, alike venerable for his age, is the living law and the oracle of the people. He makes former occurrences paſs in review before their eyes; and ſhews them degenerate nations preſenting their necks to the yoke, and the vain ſplendour of courts devouring the ſubſiſtence of the people. He deſcribes the brave Tell trampling under foot the oppreſſive ſceptre, whoſe ſway is ſtill acknowledged by half Europe. "Deſpotiſm," cries this rural philoſopher, "is the "parent of want: the lands of Italy, formerly ſo fer-"tile, are now inſufficient to clothe their miſerable "inhabitants; while a leſs favoured region, ſtrengthened "by liberty and internal union, maintains itſelf in "opulence and ſafety, unaſſiſted by numerous forces."

Behold that man who enjoys ſo vigorous an old age, and who is ſurrounded by a circle of auditors: he diſcovers to them thoſe ſecret receſſes where Nature hides her ſtores. From the exerciſe of his own ſagacity he has learned the virtues of plants, the varieties of their ſpecies, and the name of the humbleſt moſs. His penetrating glance darts into the deep boſom of the mine, or, paſſing through the fields of air, recogniſes thoſe ſulphury vapours which bear the latent thunder in their humid volumes. The treaſures of his native land, which he knows how to value, afford the mind of this ruſtic naturaliſt pleaſures no leſs uſeful than varied.

Here, where the majeſtic Mount Gothard elevates its ſummit above the clouds, and where the earth itſelf ſeems to approach the ſun, nature has aſſembled in one ſpot all the choiceſt treaſures of the globe. The deſerts

deſerts of Libya, indeed, afford us greater novelties, and its ſandy plains are more fertile in monſters: but thou, favoured region, art adorned with uſeful productions only, productions which can ſatisfy all the wants of man. Even thoſe heaps of ice, thoſe frowning rocks in appearance ſo ſterile, contribute largely to the general good, for they ſupply inexhauſtible fountains to fertiliſe the land.

What a magnificent picture does nature ſpread before the eye, when the ſun, gilding the tops of the Alps, ſcatters the ſea of vapours which undulates below! Through the receding veil the theatre of a whole world riſes to the view! Rocks, valleys, lakes, mountains, and foreſts fill the immeaſurable ſpace, and are loſt in the wide horizon. We take in at a ſingle glance the confines of divers ſtates, nations of various characters, languages, and manners; till the eyes, overcome by ſuch extent of viſion, drop their weary lids, and we aſk of the enchanted fancy a continuance of the ſcene.

When the firſt emotion of aſtoniſhment has ſubſided, how delightful is it to obſerve each ſeveral part which makes up this ſublime whole! that maſs of hills, which preſents its graceful declivity covered with flocks of ſheep whoſe bleatings reſound through the meadows; that large clear lake, which reflects from its level ſurface ſun-beams gently curved; thoſe valleys, rich in verdure, which compoſe by their various outlines points of perſpective which contract in the diſtance of the landſcape!

Here riſes a bare ſteep mountain laden with the accumulated ſnow of ages: its icy head reſts among the clouds, repelling the genial rays of noon and the fervid heat of the dog-ſtar; there a chain of cultivated hills ſpreads before the delighted eye: their green paſtures are enlivened by flocks, and their golden corn waves in the wind: yet climates ſo different as theſe are only ſeparated by a cool narrow valley.

Behold that foaming torrent ruſhing from a perpendicular height! Its rapid waves daſh among the rocks, and ſhoot even beyond their limits. Divided by the rapidity of its courſe, and the depth of the abyſs where it falls, it changes into a grey moving veil; and, at length ſcattered into humid atoms, it ſhines with the tints of the rainbow, and ſuſpended over the valley refreſhes it with plenteous dew. The traveller beholds with aſtoniſhment rivers flowing towards the ſky, and, iſſuing from one cloud, hide themſelves in the grey veil of another.

A mind enlightened by philoſophy, and exerciſed in ſtudy, a ſublime genius, who from this vaſt theatre of creation can recur to the Creator himſelf, muſt in theſe grand ſcenes find the moſt delightful occupation for his thoughts. Carry the light of knowledge into thoſe ſubterraneous mines where metals vegetate, where the gold is prepared which our rivers draw along in their rapid courſe; look upon the fields enriched with various herbage, and ſhining with liquid pearls: here ſhall you find exhauſtleſs ſubjects for warm devotion and ſcientific reſearch; here ſhall you find pleaſures

equally

equally animated and lasting; pleasures which satisfy the feelings, and purify the heart.

How beautiful is the appearance of nature, when, glittering with the remains of a summer shower, the cloudless sun darts his warm rays upon her bosom! 'Tis a moment of universal pleasure. We breathe the pure essence of a thousand plants, heightened into exquisite perfume by the recent shower; the birds sing their gladness, and mount to the higher air; the leaves shine with pendent diamonds which reflect the light in magical variety; the rich abundance of wild flowers suspend our choice by their rival charms; the green dewy hills are sprinkled with sun-beams; and the flocks, as they move along their slopes, enjoy a delicious repast from the freshened herbage.

The noble *Gentian* * lifts his proud head above the crowd of vulgar plants: a whole blossomed cohort ranges under his banner; and even his brother, distinguished by his clothing of celestial blue †, bows down to yield him homage: his golden flowers encircle the grey stalk, and form a splendid crown: upon the satined leaves streaked with dark green, liquid diamonds shoot their keen sparkles. Here, as though directed by the most equitable law, loveliness is united with virtue: this plant is an emblem of a beautiful soul vested in an amiable figure.

Here the narrow leaves of a modest vegetable ‡ spread their net-work of ash-colour: the flower re-

* *Gentiana lutea.* † *Gentiana bavarica.*

‡ *Antirrhinum alpinum.*

sembles

ſembles a bird of amethyſt, with its beak of ſhining gold: there a lovely plant * bends its indented and glittering foliage over the ſurface of the river: the ſtream reflects its beauties; the calyx tinted with delicate purple, the velvet petals ſprinkled with ſnow. The roſe and the emerald ſpread all their beauties upon the meadows; and the very rocks ſhine in a veſtment of purple.

Thoſe deſert places uncheered by the rays of the ſun, thoſe frozen abyſſes deprived of all verdure, hide beneath their ſterile ſands invaluable treaſures, which defy the rigour of the ſeaſons and all the injuries of time. 'Tis in dark and marſhy receſſes, upon the ſoil of damp grottos, that cryſtal rocks are formed. Thus ſplendour is diffuſed through theſe melancholy vaults, and their ſhadowy depths glitter with the colours of the rainbow.

O Nature, how various are thy operations, how infinite thy fertility! In the midſt of a valley ſurrounded with hills of ice, and ſubject to the empire of the fierce north wind, a boiling fountain ruſhes along. A line of ſmoke marks its courſe upon the withered herbage; its waters are impregnated with liquid metals, and its channel is tinctured with the iron and ſalts which they depoſit: heated in the boſom of the earth by the convulſions of the elements which ferment within her veins, this ſalutary fountain defies the power of the winds and froſts. Fire compoſes its very eſſence, and its waves are liquid flames.

* *Aſtrantia major.*

Not

Not far from the banks of the rapid *Avançon*, which often draws into its foaming vortex the remnants of neighbouring foreſts, a ſource, deep hidden in the boſom of the mountains, is enriched with the ſalts of the rocks that it laves. Long does it wind unſeen, confined in alabaſter vaults; but, diſſolving in its briny wave theſe firm barriers, it eſcapes through hidden clefts, and breaks upon the day. Thus Nature prevents our wants, and offers us her own ſimple and moſt neceſſary ſeaſoning for our food.

It is from the frozen ſummit of the *Fourche* that the great reſervoir of Europe pours its abundant waters into two oppoſite ſeas: there the *Aare*, the ornament of *Nutonia*, daſhes in rapid and deafening falls among rocks that it covers with foam: its limpid waters are coloured by the moſt precious of metals, and grains of gold are depoſited among the ſand of its borders. The alpine ſhepherd beholds theſe treaſures flow along under his feet; and oh, what an example for mankind! he leaves them to flow there.

O blind and fooliſh mortals! why are ye miſled by the vain allurements of avarice, ambition, and voluptuouſneſs? Why do ye poiſon by uſeleſs cares and exertions thoſe moments which ſhall never return? Why do ye deſpiſe the calm enjoyments of a moderate ſtation? Why do ye crave from deſtiny more than a ſufficiency to ſupply the demands of nature, and thus convert into wants the fantaſtic deſires of folly? Ah, believe me, it is neither the pride of ſtation nor the luxuries of riches that can beſtow happineſs: happineſs has

has its ſource in the mind, and he who poſſeſſes it will be content amidſt the toils of poverty: the gifts of Nature will be ſufficient to him.

Miſerable men! boaſt, if you will, the ſplendour of your cities, where malice and treaſon hide themſelves beneath the maſk of virtue! Your vain pageantry loads you with oppreſſive chains which glitter only in the ſight of others. Slaves to ambition, you wait like ſycophants round the doors of the great; devoted to avarice, you ſpend the days in care, the nights in watching, to obtain riches which will but increaſe your wretchedneſs. Degenerate creatures, ſacrificed to envy and ſelfiſhneſs! how ſhould your hearts glow with the noble warmth of ſocial love, or beat to the ſweet ſympathies of human affection?

Here behold a ſavage tyrant ſporting with the life of his ſlaves; his purple robe dyed in their blood! there, calumny, hatred, and inſolence requiting virtue with contempt, and envy feaſting on the miſery of others; while perverted pleaſure dries up the fountains of life, before life itſelf is well enjoyed; and avarice hides, with jealous care, thoſe riches which are as uſeleſs to himſelf as to others! O wretched mortals, tormented by inſatiable deſires, worn out by ceaſeleſs cares, your life is but a reſtleſs dream!

But oh let me veil this picture of human depravity and woe; let me return once more to that beloved theme on which my heart and my fancy could dwell for ever—the beauties of the alpine hills, the innocence and happineſs of their inhabitants! O favoured land,

rich

rich in the ſpontaneous gifts of nature, which never cloy! O happy people, whoſe every wiſh thoſe gifts can ſatisfy! your blameleſs hearts are fitted for the reception of pleaſure: no repentant ſighs, no impetuous deſires, no diſcouraging fears or ambitious hopes check its genuine flow, or taint its purity. How ſimple and uniform is your life! how few, yet how ſufficient your poſſeſſions! Your lands are cultivated by the herds; the flocks ſupply your clothing and your nouriſhment; the blooming meads furniſh your only ornaments, and the tender moſs is your couch. How ſweet thoſe dreams inſpired by the ſong of the birds, the play of the evening gale, and the murmur of the water-fall! O beloved people, ſleeping or waking, you are happy! Innocence and contentment hold their empire in your hearts, and fortune cannot add to your enjoyments.

## *AN EPISTLE*

ON

## REASON, SUPERSTITION, AND INCREDULITY.

*Addreſſed to Mr. Staehlin.*

WHENCE ariſes that confidence with which the moſt ignorant men decide upon queſtions the moſt important? Thou knoweſt, dear Staehlin, that error and falſehood ſurround truth; that they veil her pure and eternal light from human eyes. The ſage in vain conſults his reaſon: in the vaſt labyrinth of doubtful ideas, his wiſdom is miſled into ſtrange paths; and when he believes he has been purſuing the right road, and with a firm ſtep prepares to touch the deſired goal, he finds himſelf at the ſame place from whence he began his journey. On the contrary, the man whoſe uncultivated mind never urges him to reflexion, finds truth without ſeeking her: he aſſerts, and thinks he is diſpenſed from all other proof: with him, the force of conviction is always proportioned to his degree of ignorance. The vain objections of philoſophy never ſtop him; he affirms intrepidly, and decides with the point of the ſword.

Unhappy being between brute and angel, thou boaſteſt of thy reaſon without daring to follow it. What avail to thee the ſublime precepts of wiſdom, if thou, too weak to underſtand them, yet too vain to forbear the ſearch of them, always impelled towards error, canſt not chooſe the truth even when thou perceiveſt it? As a child who foreſees evil and acknowledges his fault, only to incur new evils and to fall into new faults; ſo thou, abandoned to prejudice, which thou ſervilely conſulteſt, judgeſt of every thing without motive and without principle.

Man has ſufficient intelligence to ſupply all his occaſions for it. The univerſe itſelf ſcarcely limits the flight of his thought: his induſtry can often attain that which ſeemed entirely above his reach. He has opened a road even to the ſtars. Huighens has long ſince diſcovered to us the majeſtic courſe of a thouſand new ſuns; he has computed their magnitude and ſolidity, calculated their diſtances, and determined their orbits. Impelled by the deſire of diſcovery, Columbus, triumphing over winds, and ſpreading his ſails upon new ſeas, makes the tour of the globe. Another heaven is preſented to his eyes, where new ſtars ſhine. Birds have never flown to thoſe remote ſhores which the vaſt ocean ſurrounds. The daring and ſucceſsful genius of Columbus diſcovered that which nature had concealed from our obſervation. The ſea is his only path, a ſtone his only guide: he ſeeks a new world, and finds it. A ſecond Prometheus ſteals fire from heaven from the duſt he brings forth lightnings, and his pow

der emulates the thunder. The ſea itſelf yields to the reſtraining power of man. Sands, once the dread of the mariner, now produce rich harveſts. The genius of man dives into the ſecrets of nature. Hidden immeaſurable objects are determined and revealed by calculation. Newton, overleaping the bounds preſcribed to created ſpirits, traces the vaſt plan of the univerſe: he compares that impulſion in bodies which compreſſes them towards their common centre with that which draws them in a certain orbit: he deciphers the tables inſcribed with the eternal laws of nature dictated by God himſelf.

O learned mortals, you would know all things, and you know not even yourſelves. All your ſcience extends but to the elements of wiſdom; it is an amuſement for wits, a faint conſolation for pride. To diſtinguiſh truth from falſehood, virtue from oſtentation, real objects from illuſive ones; to know the greatneſs of God, and your own littleneſs; ſuch knowledge intereſts you not: and yet it is ſuch alone that can procure us happineſs, and raiſe us to the rank of men. You turn your idle looks from real good, to fix them on the phantoms of your own brain.

Man in his infancy is a feeble plant, which can neither ſuſtain itſelf without ſupport, nor live without the cares of others. He ſoon begins to form ideas of his own, and, by the aid of the ſtrengthened organs, imagination and deſire are by degrees unfolded; ambition and ſelf-intereſt ſhew themſelves in this infant, whilſt a plaything is the object of all its wiſhes. In the

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period of early youth, when new-born feelings kindle in the mind and ſenſes, man boaſts of his contempt for virtue, and oppoſes no reflection to the torrent of the paſſions. When afterwards his underſtanding is ripened by years; when the mind, more ſettled, recoils within itſelf; when virtue and reaſon ſhould be his guides, it is then that vanity ſpreads itſelf over the whole ſoul; it is then, that, devoted to care, he paſſes his nights in conſidering how to obtain by flattery his ambitious aims: thus, ever below contentment and above peace, his life paſſes away. Old age lays his iron hand upon him: his loins bend; his countenance fades; the ſpring of his heart is diſordered; his fibres are ſtiffened; all the fluids of his body condenſe; and he dies. A tomb-ſtone ſhall tranſmit his titles to poſterity; his body mingles with the duſt, and his blood evaporates in the air. This is the end of the great man and of the ſlave. O God, whom doſt thou animate with thy breath, upon whom doſt thou laviſh thy gifts! Man is aſhamed to make uſe of them.

Every man feels the certainty of his own exiſtence in an interior ſentiment whoſe teſtimony cannot be rejected; but the God who gave us being has diſcloſed to the ſage alone our origin and future deſtiny. Mortals, it is in this world that the whole ſtrength of the ſoul muſt be collected to preſerve us from error: the happineſs of our eternal exiſtence may depend upon it. Oh, why will ye not direct your attention beyond thoſe objects which are palpable to your ſenſes? Ye ſcarcely for one moment look within yourſelves; and

if there are ſome among you, who, impelled by a reſtleſs diſcontent, dare to look into the inconceivable abyſs of futurity, too often the reward of their reſearches is doubt for the underſtanding and poniards for the heart.

Yet preſumptuous man, aſhamed of being ſilent, has raſhly pronounced upon things above his comprehenſion: as reaſon offers him but uncertainty, he creates viſions, and dreams upon the phantoms of them. Two ſeveral doctrines have for a long time divided the ſuffrages of men. Both flatter and miſlead them alike. The one has ſubjugated almoſt all human nature; it rules over the whole earth: the people are blindly ſubmiſſive to it, and royal ſceptres bow before its miniſters. For this doctrine the labourer exhauſts his ſtrength, and the ſoldier expoſes his life: it owes its birth to fraud, and its progreſs to ignorance. The prieſts maintain it for their own emolument. Whoſoever embraces this doctrine muſt abjure reaſon, renounce reflection and liberty, regulate his faith upon that of his ſovereign, adore that which he adores, and take arms at the word of command. He muſt believe only that which the prieſt permits him to believe. He will joyfully part with his earthly goods, to buy thoſe conſecrated baubles which he vainly thinks will ſecure him the treaſures of a life to come. He will multiply his gods at the will of the prieſts, and in the hour of death will reſt his belief of ſalvation or eternal puniſhment on their word.

Thus the mind of man, ſwelled by an empty pride, diſdains

diſdains the road of nature which he is able to comprehend. The gentle light of day, merely as the effect of the orb which glitters in the air, would not intereſt him, if in that orb he beheld not a divinity to excite his aſtoniſhment. The ſound of the thunder which burſts in the boſom of the clouds terrifies him; and his terror is ſanctified by ſeeing an incenſed deity directing the ſtorm.

As the influence of ſuperſtition increaſed, flattery and artifice placed in heaven thoſe heroes of ancient times whoſe conqueſts had made them illuſtrious. The ſame world which they had ravaged during their life honoured them after their death. The Jupiter of Babylon deſerved the ſevereſt puniſhment. Criminality was ſoon after joined to the idea of a divinity: thoſe actions which diſgraced humanity were preſented as a model for men. On ſuperb altars, and under images of pure gold, they ſacrificed to treaſon, to luxury, to the moſt ſhameful vices. The earth was covered with ſacred woods and temples raiſed to imaginary divinities. The prieſt ſoon claimed a ſhare of the homage which was offered to his gods: pageantry, fraud, and pretended miracles, baniſhed affrighted liberty from the world; truth was hidden under impenetrable clouds; reaſon was degraded; and philoſophy was deemed impious. Thus the moſt enlightened renounced the privilege of thinking, and every thing bent under the yoke of fanaticiſm.

The furies of this frightful monſter ſurpaſs every evil to which the wrath of God could ever deliver his people. In the depths of a myſterious ſanctuary,

ſheltered from the eyes of men, fear and prejudice have raiſed him a throne: at his ſide ſtands artful hypocriſy with bended head, and impoſture, his mother, covered with a maſk. There, amidſt clouds of incenſe which riſe to the bright arches of the temple, he pays homage to his own idol. If truth dare to lift up her voice in this conſecrated place, fanaticiſm, with vengeful looks, arms his hand with a poniard, and with his venomed tongue denounces death and deſtruction upon her. Calumny, treaſon, murder, cruel miniſters of his rage, overturn the church and ſtate. The blood of whole nations ſcarcely ſatiates his blind fury, whilſt his altars are erected upon the ruins of thrones yet foaming with the blood of the kings he has ſacrificed. Such is the principal object before which the whole univerſe bows: all the ſubordinate pagods, with whatever pomp they are inveſted, glitter only with rays which are borrowed from his luſtre: they owe to him their very exiſtence: without him they would ſink into oblivion: alike in their origin, they differ but in form; white among the northern nations, black among the ſouthern: now they are tyrants fed with human blood; now benignant deities, whoſe anger is appeaſed by a little gold. The city of Paris abounded not more in ſharpers before Argenſon had reformed its police, than the earth has done in odious divinities. There is no object ſo abhorred, no animal ſo unclean, of which ſome nation has not made an idol. He who has been tied to the gallows in one country is honoured with an altar in another. Sandy Perſia adores the ſun which

conſumes it: the ſtupid inhabitant of Memphis ſeeks the crocodile at the bottom of moraſſes, and burns incenſe to the god who devours him: leſs ſtupid at a different period, when the gardens were his temples, and the plants his gods. The bad genius which was ſuppoſed to be the author of evil, had, like the author of all good, his chapels and his prieſts. What atrocious deceiver could engage men to bend the knee to ſuch monſters, to debaſe themſelves ſo far as to ſacrifice to demons!

In vain does reaſon detect the falſity of a doctrine: when uttered by a prieſt, error takes the impoſing tone of wiſdom. Hurried away by the illuſion of the ſenſes, the heart of man attaches itſelf to chimeras, and is pleaſed with its own wanderings: hence we ſo ſtrongly maintain an opinion which was firſt adopted from credulity, as to defend it at the expence of our blood. Our anceſtors, in the fury of holy zeal, pronounced anathemas upon thoſe who dared to eſteem that which they condemned; and their deſcendants, inflamed with the ſame contagious fury, planted religion with the ſword, and watered it with blood. Have not the people of the old world ſacrificed thoſe of the new to a difference of opinion? Have we not ſeen angry princes dip their garments in the blood of their faithful ſubjects; and theſe very ſubjects receive their puniſhment with an obſtinate joy for the ſake of a diſpute upon words of which they underſtood nothing? Diſſenſion upon points of doctrine has armed brother againſt brother; it has torn from the bleeding ſtate her

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own members, and given them her again to devour. It has authorized perjury and treaſon for the ſake of God's glory: there is no crime which, under this pretext, is not permitted to a prieſt.

The other doctrine, which is followed by a ſmall number of ſectaries, locks itſelf in thought, and is covered with ſilence. It is adopted by thoſe who confide in their own intelligence. Wiſe men embrace it in ſecret; fools diſplay it in public. The deſpot, whom the fear of a God reſtrains in the commiſſion of crime; the obſtinate man, who diſdains to think with the crowd; the ſenſualiſt, whom the fear of approaching judgment would diſturb in his enjoyments; all theſe, though for different motives, agree in revolting againſt the belief of a divinity. The prieſt himſelf (veiling in an artful deportment his inward contempt for the God whom he profeſſedly adores) laughs in ſecret at the people who bow before images conſecrated by fraud, and revered by folly. All theſe regard the name of God as a vain word, which was adopted for political reaſons, and which is reſpected only by dupes. Believing neither in the general ſcheme of Providence, nor even in Providence itſelf, they attribute all the powers of the human mind, all the appearances of nature, to the agency of blind chance. They confound the operations of matter with thoſe of ſpirit, and look upon the ſoul as a mere machine which neither conceives nor acts but by the mechaniſm of the body, and which periſhes with it. In the opinion of theſe men, the moſt eſtimable virtues are but ineffectual words,

words, dreams of a weak brain that pride and hypocriſy have raiſed into notice, that the credulity of the people has ſanctified, and that, when examined, muſt be deſpiſed by every reaſonable man. To agree with their ideas, we muſt believe the moſt generous actions to be the effect of fear, and look on ſelf-intereſt as the ſpring of benevolence.

By ſuch principles, theſe men render themſelves independent of the whole world, and acknowledge no other judge than their own reaſon. Happy if the truth itſelf can be diſcovered by determinate ſigns, if prejudice blind not the moſt penetrating eyes, and if, in the embarraſſing conflict between neceſſity and chance, our reaſon be enabled to fix the choice, and to reſolve our doubts. But who ſhould refer to the deciſion of a judge ſo blind, ſo apt to waver, and to be ſeduced by the wiſhes of him who ſubmits to his judgment? How eaſily we believe that which we deſire! The heart gives importance to weak reaſons; it perverts the very teſtimony of the ſenſes, and prefers a flattering falſehood to a ſevere truth.

The voluptuous Ariſtippus, who, eager to gratify his ſenſes, for ever excites them to new deſires, after having renounced every duty, and ſpent his whole life in vicious purſuits, cannot bear that the terror of a Supreme Judge ſhould come to ſtop him in his exceſs. Fear makes him an unbeliever. "God," ſays he, "reigns only in heaven; abſorbed in the bleſſedneſs "of his own ſtate, he watches not the conduct of "men." Vain and weak ſophiſtry! The better reaſon

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of this libertine rejects it: it is his wiſhes that cling to it; for, if God reign over the univerſe, puniſhment muſt await ſuch crimes as his.

A ſincere philoſopher alſo (ſtruck by a laudable contempt for abſurd traditions) will often apply himſelf to ſeek the truth by the light of his own reaſon. An enemy to all prejudice, ſupported upon certain principles, he hopes for the power of informing and of knowing himſelf. The meditations of the vulgar conduct him immediately to the ſource of being; but ſo ſoon as, loſing ſight of palpable objects, he ventures upon the vaſt ocean of infinity, his light abandons him; he is loſt in darkneſs. Now a falſe glimmer miſleads him in his road; now the light of a deceptive meteor draws him upon ſands where his bark ſuddenly ſplits. Then this unhappy reaſoner, engaged in endleſs doubts, is uncertain of his own being: diſtruſting his ſenſes, he takes every thing for a vain appearance, rejects every principle, and prides himſelf in his ignorance: the living intelligence of God no longer diſſipates the thick clouds of his blindneſs, and the voice of Nature ſpeaks in vain to his hardened ear. Thus become doubtful of his own exiſtence, how can he lift his mind to the ſource of it?

Unfortunate race! inconſiſtent beings! your knowledge is but illuſion; your moſt precious happineſs but a dream: if you make a choice, it is erroneous; if you advance one ſtep, you fall. We are all miſled, but often in oppoſite directions; like thoſe who look at objects through tinted glaſſes, who all ſee them under falſe

falſe colours, but under various ſhades. One is led aſtray, another deceives himſelf; the one errs from ſtupidity, the other from too much imagination. This man hopes for a happy futurity without regulating his conduct according to ſuch a hope; that converts his very virtues into ſubjects of deſpondency. The vulgar want wiſdom, the philoſophers diſcretion. Miſery and deception reign over the earth, with this difference only, that the peaceable errors of one part of mankind are hurtful only to their own repoſe; while the credulous rage of the other part diſturbs the common tranquillity.

Dear Staehlin, what choice wilt thou make between the riſk of a falſe opinion and the cruel ſuſpenſe of doubt?

Man falls into many errors without neceſſity: born the ſon of the earth, he has taken flight towards heaven. He would reform, according to his own ideas, the vaſt plan of the univerſe. Impatient of the bounds preſcribed to human reaſon, he will encounter the danger of falling, by venturing beyond his ſphere rather than maintain himſelf firm within it. Aſk me not how God employs himſelf in the ſolitude of eternity; what motive determined him to create the univerſe in a fixed time; what was the ſtate of the ſoul before it was clothed with the body, or how it will exiſt in a ſeparate ſtate; how it ſprang from the boſom of annihilation; what was the firſt origin of thought, or how a foreign ſubſtance can be the organ of it: how the immenſe revolutions of a firſt eternity were made

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ſubject to the beginning of time; and if, when arrived at its laſt boundary, time ſhall be ſwallowed up in a new eternity to come. Theſe are myſteries of which the knowledge is forbidden to me, and which no creature ſhould preſume to ſearch. May thoſe to whom we wiſh evil be occupied in ſuch fruitleſs curioſity!

There is a God, and that is ſufficient for us to know: all nature declares him to us, and every part of the univerſe ſhews us the impreſſion of his hand. Do not thoſe vaſt regions, where innumerable globes move round ſuns fixed in an endleſs repoſe, ſhine with a ſplendour that can only proceed from divinity? Myriads of ſtars move through their orbits in an order hidden under apparent confuſion: they are fixed by ſecret laws written by the finger of God; they are impelled by his will; he preſcribes their reſt and their motions; he has varied their eſſence conformably to determinate ends.

The wonders of God's wiſdom appear in the ſmalleſt pebble: in the vileſt inſect (and who, Staehlin, knows it better than thou?) every part tends to a uniform deſign. A hand infinitely ſuperior to that of man has woven that net-work of imperceptible fibres, thoſe delicate veſſels which diſtribute the fluids, and carry them by a regular circulation towards the deſtined place: no parts are confuſed together; nothing is wanting, nothing is ſuperfluous: every thing moves without interruption, and without hurry. In the inanimate ſeed, the canals are already marked which will become needful to the living animal. Man above all,

all, man who is deſtined to command the whole earth, is the grand work of Omnipotence: in him is united all the art and grandeur employed in the conſtruction of other bodies: his whole form announces him the chief of creation.

Survey once more the vaſt field of God's works: here behold the tender flower adorning its opening charms with the tears of morning: there, unformed gold, ſtill refining and increaſing within the bowels of the earth for the uſe of its inhabitants. In the vaſt ſpace of air, in the abyſſes of the ocean, wherever we direct our reſearches, the image of God is diſplayed in the wonders of creation.

This is the whole extent of my knowledge: but the God who lives in all things is ſtill more clearly manifeſt in the works of his grace. Even as the ſtar of night, by a doubtful gleaming, guides us through the ſhades of darkneſs, ſo reaſon may offer us ſome conſolation in our ignorance. When a celeſtial beam ſhall have penetrated the twilight which ſurrounds us, then the morning of truth ſhall diſcloſe to us the great ſpectacle of the univerſe: till then, too weak to raiſe herſelf to the tone of revealed truth, humble reaſon muſt confine herſelf to the genuine expreſſion of a timid adoration.

Reaſon ſhews us there is a God. What avails it to ſearch beyond? If ignorance level us with brutes, a vain curioſity tends but to our own confuſion. We fly on borrowed wings towards the ſun, only to be precipitated into the ſea. Contentment is preferable to knowledge; philoſophy has its limits, at which it would be folly to

murmur, and which Newton has not miſtaken. Moderation was at all times the ſource of true happineſs: it therefore depends on ourſelves alone to fix our deſtiny. For a long time, my dear Staehlin, we have acknowledged the inſufficiency of the human underſtanding; we have detached our ſenſes from trifles, and our hearts from vanity. Let pretending ſages teach us that which they do not feel; let them boaſt to us that outward bliſs which veils their ſecret horrors: but let us repoſe in peace of mind, and health of body, that ſovereign good which Zeno ſought without finding. The ſciences ſhall ſerve us for amuſement; the gardens ſhall offer us their flowers, the meadows their verdure, the woods their refreſhing coolneſs: ſometimes the converſation of a choſen friend, now a book, and now our own reflections, ſhall help to inſtruct us. Let us aſk nothing of fortune! May all our days reſemble each other, and may we paſs through life unambitious and unheeded! May we, preſerved from corporeal infirmities, cheriſh life without fearing death; and when death ſhall come, may Heaven grant me the conſolation of mingling my aſhes with thoſe of my friend!

## *AN EPISTLE*

ON

## THE VANITY OF HUMAN VIRTUES,

*Addreſſed to Mr. Staehlin.*

DECEITFUL virtues, whoſe gaudy clothing attracts the gaze of the vulgar and the worſhip of folly, why have I eſteemed you ſo long? I ſcorn your falſe ſplendour. Following the footſteps of Swift and Hobbes, I will enter thoſe ſanctuaries where ſtand the idols which prejudice has ſanctified, and tear away, with a daring hand, thoſe maſks which conceal their nothingneſs.

What are thoſe men who in their life-times have been celebrated as heroes, and after death placed among the gods? Liſten to the voice of truth, and ſhe will tell you they are the vileſt of ſlaves. When an individual becomes the idol of the multitude, his vices all diſappear; every virtue is attributed to him: the next generation exalts him into a god, and his moſt trifling words are engraven upon marble. His life has been a ſatire on all theſe praiſes, but in vain has it been ſo; popular prejudice beautifies his faults, and calls his foibles meritorious.

The errors of man are infinitely various. Some, from the ardour of miſtaken devotion, have ſcorned the uſe and enjoyment of their ſenſes, which the gracious Creator beſtowed as inlets to happineſs. The hermit will paſs his life on the top of a ſolitary mountain, and believes he exerts the ſublimeſt virtue in thus ſeparating himſelf from the living world which he beholds at his feet: the ſeverer orders of monks will live together in eternal ſilence, and think this unnatural abſtinence is acceptable to him who diſtinguiſhed man by the gift of ſpeech.

Why ſhould we withdraw from the world? why torment ourſelves only for the purpoſe of exchanging one vice for another; only that thorns may ſucceed to tares? We think ourſelves free, when, in fact, we have only changed our maſter: we exclaim againſt avarice to juſtify our prodigality. In vain would man exalt himſelf above his own nature: the weight of the body draws him down, and confines him to his deſtined place. Thus thoſe planets which a rapid impulſe would carry from their central ſtar are retained in their orbit by an oppoſite power which ſtops their daring flight.

Let us attentively examine thoſe idols which the fancies of miſtaken men have created. Let us attribute to them every merit they can boaſt. In all they have done, and all they have omitted to do, we cannot fail to diſcern the features of vice beneath the veil of virtue: exterior marks ſhall betray the hidden poiſon.

Shew us thoſe phantoms of your brain which nature refuſes to acknowledge; thoſe beings whoſe excellence

is the glory of humanity; whoſe blameleſs lives the Creator points out as models for our imitation. Even among theſe pretended angels of the church, we ſhall find many errors which fanaticiſm endeavours to conceal, and which reaſon penetrates and reproves. Confide not in thoſe artful looks, in that feigned humility, beneath which the pretended ſervants of mankind conceal their deſign of enſlaving them. Infatuation has been ever the characteriſtic of impoſtors: their words are oracles, and they command when they ſeem to ſupplicate.

What a dreadful ſcene of confuſion and carnage aroſe from the alteration of the ſtyle! The weſtern church hurls excommunicating curſes againſt that of the eaſt; mitres combat with mitres, and thoſe who fall in the conteſt are deified by their ſeveral factions. The anathemas of the north are repulſed by thoſe of the ſouth, and the ſanctuary itſelf becomes the theatre of bloodſhed. There, in contempt of God and reaſon, they ſeal the deciſion of the conquering diſputants with the blood of thoſe who are conquered. Atrocious tyranny! deteſtable zeal againſt hereſy! not the offſpring of ſavage rage, but tranſmitted by *ſaints* to the *miniſters* of *religion!* it boils in the veins of thoſe who *teach* charity, and *act* like the furies of hell.

Long ere the reign of a ſovereign pontiff and the deification of a man, the ſacerdotal pride had burſt all bounds: it was this pride which in later times deluged the ruins of *Toulouſe* with the blood of its citizens, and eſtabliſhed the throne of fanaticiſm upon the

bodies of the ſlain, when *Dominic* by his prayers drew anathemas upon the chief of the *Albigeois*, and excited *Montfort* himſelf to trample the hereſy which was already humbled in the duſt.

But perhaps a previous deſign of cenſuring may render me too ſevere: perfection is beyond the attainment of man, and it is ſufficient if great virtues cover the failings of humanity. Even the ſun is not without its ſpots. But when thoſe idols which men adore glitter only with a falſe brilliancy, when we recognize the erring man where they announced the hero, ſhould their altars obtain the worſhip of the univerſe? No: truth, in contempt of vain prejudice, ſhall overthrow their pompous ſtructure.

Vulgar minds will never diſtinguiſh the true characteriſtics of virtue, nor the line which ſeparates good from evil: the philoſopher himſelf can ſcarcely define the limits of theſe two empires, ſo ſtrange are the deceptions in their ſeveral appearances. Where is to be found that unprejudiced ſage who has never beſtowed praiſe upon unworthy actions, nor hated a virtuous adverſary? Moſt frequently it is only by a knowledge of every motive, aim, and circumſtance which inſpires the actions of men, that we can fairly judge of them, or appreciate their merit. A ſingle moment of vanity may tarniſh the ſplendour of a glorious life. The variation of times may vary the duties which are expected of us, and the ſame action which attracted applauſe to-day may to-morrow overwhelm us with diſgrace. A

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ſentence which might be graceful in the mouth of Cato would be ridiculous in that of a fool. It is this which the vulgar ſoul does not, nor ever will, underſtand: he ſtops at the rind without taſting the fruit: an indifferent ſpectator of the outward movements of this world, he ſeeks not to diſcover the ſprings which direct them. Guided in his uncertain judgments by general opinion, he ſees only with the eyes of others, and borrows even his very language. A coloured glaſs, preſented to the rays of the ſun, deceives the eye by lending its tints to every ſurrounding object: ſo does prejudice change the very eſſence of our ideas; it confounds bigotry and hypocriſy with piety and devotion. Opinions are inherited like worldly goods; we imbibe love and hatred with our very milk, and the follies of the grandfather are perpetuated in the grandſons. It is thus that the ignorant pronounce and diſpenſe infamy or glory: but ſhall we take their opinions for the rule of ours?

Xavier, like a meteor, over-runs the aſtoniſhed regions of the eaſt, and throws down the idols of Japan to ſubſtitute his own. The irritated Bonzes, in order to preſerve the worſhip of their deity, dare to ſlay this holy man. He dies, but his doctrine ſurvives him: his diſciples perfidiouſly rebel againſt the ſtate which protected them, and its conſtitution is ſhaken by their efforts. At length the prince is rouſed, and his tardy vengeance delivers to condign puniſhment the enemies of the empire. The greateſt number of the converted are prevailed on to deny their new god, that they may ſecure

ſecure to themſelves ſafety, life, or rewards. A ſingle man out of a million braves the overwhelming ſtorm; he glories in his chains, meets his fate with intrepid courage, and dies invoking his god. The name of this martyr is celebrated long after the winds have diſperſed his aſhes: in Europe they revere his memory, they raiſe ſplendid altars to his name, and join it with that of the higheſt angels. If, on the contrary, a Huron, wandering upon the ſnowy ſhores of lake Erie, fall into the hands of his enemies; if his butcher ſtand ready; if the widow, whoſe choice might have ſaved him, pronounce, by her refuſal, the ſentence of his death; what is the conduct of this barbarian? how does he receive his puniſhment? Why he ſings amidſt his torments; he provokes, he braves the threats of his enemies; no ſufferings can ſhake his reſolution; he jeſts even while the flames are conſuming him. Whoſe death is moſt honourable, the ſavage's or the martyr's? The ſame heroiſm ſeems to inſpire each, and to crown their lives with equal glory: yet altars and temples are adjudged to the martyr, while the naked hero of Quebec is conſidered as a brute; ſo immenſely important is it, that a wretch who is condemned to puniſhment ſhould pronounce ſome holy words which he does not himſelf underſtand. But in truth, the dying ſavage is more worthy of being honoured than the martyr; for it is by the juſtice or injuſtice of their puniſhment that we muſt appreciate their merit in enduring it. The fanatic receives the due reward of his crimes; for he who, in contempt of the laws, diſturbs public tranquil-

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lity, profanes the eſtabliſhed worſhip, anathematizes the ſovereign, and ſcatters the ſeeds of rebellion—he, I ſay, ſuffers deſerving of his puniſhment: on the contrary, the man who falls into the hands of mercileſs barbarians, who is faſtened to the fatal ſtake, tried with excruciating tortures, and ſtill, to the laſt breath, maintains an unſhaken ſoul—this man dies the victim, not of his own crime, but of the fury of his enemies. And ſurely courage is only worthy of praiſe when it is accompanied with innocence.

Another inſtance of the extenſive empire of prejudice is the different judgments we paſs upon the ſame actions when performed by a Chriſtian, or an Indian devotee. The Chriſtian will hide himſelf in the hollow of a rock, and purſue, with naked feet, the paths where thoſe wild roots grow which ſupply his ſcanty nouriſhment: broken-hearted with remorſe, he atones for the ſins he has committed, or which he may ſtill commit, by ſteeping in his own blood the cords he uſes againſt himſelf: but when he diſplays before the multitude his voluntary wounds, they cry, "What a miracle of "piety!" and poſterity recounts the pains this miſtaken man has courted, and the pleaſures he has refuſed. The Bramin proves the ſincerity of his repentance by a thouſand acts of the moſt rigid mortification: naked and motionleſs, he dwells beneath the ſcorching heat of noon; he extends his mangled arms to wither their fleſh in the ſun; and perhaps his very life falls a ſacrifice to repentance for ſins which, by a little money, had obtained remiſſion at Rome. How is it that we

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ſpeak of this ſelf-torturing Indian? We pity his infanity.

Oh, when ſhall we be freed from the dominion of error? When will the mind of man raiſe itſelf to the worſhip of real virtue, and ceaſe to adore her gaudy mimics? See that blooming girl led to the ſacred altar, where ſhe is to renounce the world, and embrace a long life of gloomy and uſeleſs devotion. The irrevocable vow has paſſed her lips, and the cell cloſes upon its victim. Oh, diſmal ſight! Nature and happineſs revolt at it! But far different the giddy multitude: they yield to the moſt extravagant tranſports, and deafen with overwhelming praiſe this victim of miſtaken piety. I grant that the youthful nun, as yet inexperienced in the pleaſures of this world, may not feel the importance of the ſacrifice ſhe makes; I will ſuppoſe that no retroſpection of the benefits ſhe has renounced will awaken in her mind blameable and uſeleſs repentance; that no flame but devotion has yet glowed in her innocent heart, that her reaſon holds dominion over her ſenſes, and that ſhe alone is unconſcious of her exterior charms: I will even allow (what nevertheleſs is impoſſible) that virtue may ſpring from conſtraint: but what is there in all this ſo worthy of admiration? Why do the thoughtleſs crowd ſend forth theſe ſhouts of gladneſs? Cunning and ſelf-intereſt have traverſed the intentions of nature, by condemning to ſolitude graces which were deſtined to love; and, by ſuppreſſing an illuſtrious line, have deſtroyed heroes even before their birth: this young girl, deceived by the-

the choice which has been made for her, ſhall hereafter find herſelf loſt to the world and a burden to herſelf: but, O you, who are better acquainted with the voice of Nature, ſay, is there one of her laws more deciſive than that of chaſte love? Can that then be right which Nature diſowns? and dare you blame the ſentiments which ſhe inſpires? The charms of beauty are created for our happineſs, and we are formed to enjoy them: why elſe was that power beſtowed on them which ſubjugates our hearts, a power which baffles the wiſdom of the ſage? A pure and fruitful flame was conſecrated by divine command; ſterility was the token of Heaven's wrath. How then can virtues be incompatible with each other? How can the malediction of the old law become a bleſſing beneath the new?

Hark! the trumpet ſounds to war, and armed battalions cover the extended field. "The day is ours," cries the hero, "victory decides for us." Fearleſs in the midſt of the deſtroying ſhot, which reſound through the air, and overthrow whole files in their courſe, he braves the terrors of oppoſing deſtiny: his wounded body ſinks to the earth, but the undaunted hero is ſtill maintained in his ſoul. Theſe flaſhes, which announce the arrows of death, gleam on his eyes like feſtive fires; and, when the blood guſhes from his wounds, he looks upon it as upon the blood of a ſtranger. Inevitable death at length ſtops his heart; but, to its laſt beat, he ſupports his conſtancy. "What conſummate valour!" cries the multitude: "this hero's name ſhall be engraven upon marble, and

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"tranſmitted to the remoteſt poſterity." But how do we appreciate that courage in an animal, which we praiſe ſo laviſhly in one of our own ſpecies (for the courage we have been deſcribing is not ſo much the reſult of *ſentiment* as of *bodily power*)? A boar, irritated by the purſuit of the hunters, turns upon them, and braves his deſtiny: raiſing his thick briſtles, and preſenting his ſharp teeth, he darts furiouſly among the dogs: ſtill reſiſting the pike which ſtabs him to the heart, he deſtroys his raſh enemy, and dies not till he has obtained his vengeance. The hunters reward the courage of this brute warrior by ſharing his carcaſe with the dogs.

Behold that recluſe and melancholy ſage! His humble looks are bent upon the earth; a coarſe tattered garment ſerves him for clothing; a morſel of bread, begged from the hand of charity, and a little water, which he takes in the hollow of his hand, ſupply all his neceſſities. Privation conſtitutes his wealth: he is dead to this world, and this world is a void to him. Gold cannot attract his ſteady eye, nor can beauty itſelf ſmooth the ſeverity of his brow. His virtue lifts him above the ſhafts of ſlander and the viciſſitudes of fortune. His mind, for ever occupied in contemplating the Deity, can take no intereſt in terreſtrial objects. If this ſevere philoſopher feel humiliated at his own littleneſs, how muſt he appreciate his fellow men? To him the obſervance of rigid virtue is but a pleaſurable amuſement: his ſoul is already in heaven; it is his body only which connects him with

with the earth. O holy man! when thy name ſhall mount to the very ſkies, ſhun Diogenes, and beware of his lantern!—Ah me, if we could examine the inward man, how often ſhould we find the heart and the conduct at variance with each other!—The very glory which this ſanctimonious hypocrite affects to deſpiſe, is the idol of his worſhip: like the Parthians, he ſeeks victory in flight, and ſacrifices to vain ambition thoſe other vices to which his character leſs forcibly inclines him. For the hope of divine honours he can reſign the ſplendours of the world. Thus does falſe glory deck herſelf in the robe of virtue; thus is hypocriſy ſanctified by performing the ceremonials of religion.

Let us contemplate this tranſcendent genius wrapt in his profound ideas: his roving eyes announce the flight of his mind, which, paſſing the bounds of viſible ſpace, travels in worlds unknown. He ſacrifices youth, repoſe, and pleaſure, to an intenſe ſtudy of celeſtial objects. He can determine the quantities of a curve by an indefinite ſeries of unknown numbers; he can detach the primary colours from a ſingle ray of light; he comprehends that wonderful power which retains the celeſtial globes in their orbits; the ſecret ſprings which govern their motions; and the attraction which impels the flux and reflux of the ſea. His mind is a ſource of new diſcoveries, a luminary of ſcience: but, alas! its too great ardour conſumes his mortal part: he dies fatiated with knowledge, and the aſtronomer ſhall one day read his name in the heavenly conſtellations. "Deign, O ſublime ſpirit, deign once

more to appear among us; and if amidſt the ſhades of the tomb there yet remain to thee any remembrance of this world, any deſire for the light of day, return, and pour into my attentive ear the loſt precepts of that knowledge which aſtoniſhed mankind. Declare what is the infallible rule by which truth may be diſtinguiſhed from falſehood; ſhew how ſolidity is ſeparated from empty ſpace, and how elementary matter aſſumes thoſe appearances which are at once ſo various and ſo conſtant: explain the cauſes of gravity and elaſticity, the attraction between iron and the loadſtone, the ſudden expanſion of light, the principle of coheſion. . . . . O ſublime ſpirit, deign to inſtruct weak mortals in all theſe myſteries: already has thy aſtoniſhing progreſs in them drawn upon thee their admiring gaze." . . . . . But, alas, thy attainments are vain! in vain doſt thou employ the aid of algebra to elucidate the obſcure traces of truth. Never yet has a created being fathomed the depths of nature; it is enough to know her exterior form. Alas, then, all thy painful and inceſſant labours have ſerved no purpoſe but to ſhew thee the weakneſs and ignorance of man.

"This world," ſaid Cato, the tutelary genius of Rome, "this world, ſubjugated by Cæſar, is no longer worthy of me." He ſpoke, and buried a poniard in his heart. Neither the authority of the great, the ſplendour of riches, nor the danger of aſſaſſination, could ever draw aſide this inflexible ſoul from the public intereſt, and the cauſe of virtuous citizens. He ſtood alone, yet was the ſupport of his country. His

heart knew neither fears nor deſires; and his perfect life entitled him to a ſpotleſs renown. In him was renewed primeval heroiſm; virtue which ſacrifices all to patriotiſm, and ſeeks nothing for itſelf. Never did Cato balance between intereſt and right. Deſtiny was for Cæſar; Cato was for the vanquiſhed. But let us examine the ſource of this wonderful magnanimity by which the judgment is ſo liable to be deceived: the ſeeming heroiſm we have been deſcribing is but a headſtrong pride, which in its diſdain of a foreign yoke will oppoſe itſelf to deſtiny, and periſh rather than yield; it is an unbending ſtubbornneſs, an egotiſm which kills all ſenſibility for others.

Has man then driven virtue from his heart, and has ſhe taken her flight towards heaven? Does God himſelf reject the guilty race whom he created? and is there not one righteous ſoul among the millions of mankind? Oh yes! for the Divinity cannot hate the work of his own hands, nor deliver to vengeance him whom goodneſs called into being. Virtue, the object of the philoſopher's deſire, the aim of all his efforts—virtue, though we often miſtake her appearances, ſtill lives at the bottom of our hearts. O thou brighteſt emanation of Divinity, ſtill for ever art thou clothed in the ſplendour of thy native beauty! O virtue, he who loves thee not has never known thee.

The voluptuary in his groſs ignorance ſtigmatiſes virtue as an oppoſer of nature; but nature and virtue are ſiſters inſeparably united: one can never demand what ſhall be refuſed by the other. It is not virtue

which bids us ſeal with our blood the teſtimony of a particular belief, or ſacrifice our life to the phantom of vain glory: it is not virtue which commands us to bury ourſelves beneath the ruins of our country, to ſtifle our chaſte deſires, or to forego thoſe copious enjoyments which nature holds out for our acceptance: that fruitleſs deſire of knowledge which exceeds our capacity, ſprings not from virtue: all her precepts tend but to one point—the happineſs of man.

The law of virtue, far different from the maxims of vain philoſophy, is the voice of God ſpeaking in our hearts. The conſciouſneſs thus excited in us determines the merit of all our actions; warns, approves, impels, retards us, and is the unerring director of our will. While man obeys this internal monitor, he cannot wander from the right path; he cannot miſtake the ſemblance of virtue for herſelf, nor be deceived in the choice of his own happineſs: the ſtorm of the paſſions will no longer diſturb his peace, nor will ſorrow for remembered crimes prey in ſecret upon his heart. Too wiſe to purchaſe an apparent good at the expence of a real evil, he will never incur regret by yielding to tranſient deſires. To his clear and ſearching eye glory and pleaſure appear like blooming fruit, which, uſed diſcreetly, are refreſhing to the taſte; but which, if taken in exceſs, become poiſon. This true philoſopher awaits in pious calm that hour which brings terror to the wicked: he is content to preſerve his preſent exiſtence, and content to reſign it.

O perfect and immutable being, ſource of all goodneſs!

neſs! it is from thee we derive our internal conſciouſneſs and every other bleſſing. Man believes himſelf free while acting only beneath the impulſe of thy love. Void in ourſelves, we can preſent thee no offering but ſuch as has been the gift of thy bounty to us. All is pure which is derived from thee; and falſehood ſinks before thee into her native nothingneſs. Oh, how many actions which are now the objects of human adoration, ſhall, when judged by thee, meet puniſhment inſtead of recompenſe!

## *SATIRE I.*

### 1731.

LET us ceaſe to offend by cenſuring the evil deeds of men. Truth manifeſts herſelf in vain. Juvenal was the ſcourge of his time; yet, to himſelf, what was the conſequence of his ſatires? and what was their benefit to ſociety? Juvenal was exiled from his country, and condemned to inhabit the barren deſerts of Libya; the people of Rome read his works, and perſevered in every crime they cenſured. 'Tis the ſame in our own times. Do rhyme and reaſon harmoniſe better ſince Deſpreaux attempted to baniſh falſe taſte from the poetry of the French? No: the repreſentation of *Scapin's tricks* draws whole crowds to the theatre. But for me, who was not born under a poetic ſtar, what impels me to decide upon the conduct of men? Will the falſe *Damis* ſuſpend his ſecret ſlanders while he reads my verſes? No: his hatred will become more bitter; his heart is unchangeable: prepoſſeſſed with the idea of his own merit, he will ſcorn advice, though it were offered beneath the moſt ſeducing name.

Away with ſeverity, then; let us praiſe—courage, my muſe! let praiſe be your theme. Thus, if we do not amend, we ſhall at leaſt afford entertainment. Truth gains nought but hatred; ſmiles and favours

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hang upon the ſteps of falſehood. Had not Boileau poſſeſſed the prudence to ſatiriſe powerleſs authors only, and to celebrate thoſe alone which deſtiny as well as nature favoured—benumbed with cold, and dying upon a litter, he had partaken the groans of the unfortunate St. Amand.

But whence ſhall I ſelect the hero of my ſong? In glancing over long liſts of names, in ſurveying all ranks from the ſceptre to the ſheep-hook, I find copious matter for reproach, but ſcanty ſubjects for praiſe. If, like Auguſtus, I make the catalogue of different ages and different ranks, ſtill can I never find the end of vice, nor the beginning of virtue.

O Helvetia! once the land of heroes, how is it poſſible that the men whom we now behold could have deſcended from thy former inhabitants? Did the ſwords of the noble founders and defenders of the ſtate glitter in theſe very fields? Is it here that they laviſhed their blood, and tinged with it the banners won from the enemy? Oh, where are thoſe tutelary geniuſes of the ſtate, who, with an unſhaken ſoul, would live or die for their country; who, deſpiſing equally the arms and the treaſures of the enemy, have acquired a glory that even the long-continued degeneracy of their deſcendants cannot veil with the ſhade of oblivion? Shall thoſe times return no more when his flocks were the only riches of the citizen; when the ſame hands wielded in turn the inſtruments of huſbandry and the reins of government; when women, with a greatneſs of ſoul now unknown among them, gave up their jewels to promote the

the welfare of the republic, of that republic whoſe revenues are now expended upon the moſt ſhameful luxuries? Where is now that noble ambition which drew the Romans from obſcurity, and gave them the empire of the world; which made them feel it equally a pleaſure and a duty to ſupport fatigues, to brave dangers, to give life itſelf for their country; which incited them to obtain by merit the acknowledgments of their cotemporaries, and to ſacrifice themſelves for poſterity? Alas! this flame, this generous flame, lives no longer in the heart of man! gone are thoſe diſintereſted ſpirits which deſire no other riches, no other power, than thoſe of their country; and who yield up their private advantages to promote the welfare of their fellow-citizens: alas! ſuch men are ſeen no more; virtue has left the earth, and genius is vaniſhed with her: no veſtige of them remains but a faint and empty ſhadow.

Yet, amid theſe juſt lamentations, theſe well-merited cenſures, let me not forget to obſerve thoſe few traces of the golden age which ſtill remain among us, nor to praiſe thoſe rare ornaments of humanity whoſe zeal ſtill keeps alive ſome virtue in our republic, and whom the Romans might have been proud to poſſeſs in their days of liberty. We have a chief who ſupports with courage all the weight, all the labours of his well-merited dignity: not like thoſe who learn the duties of their employment only from the exerciſe of it, he was accompliſhed in the art of government ere he emerged from a private ſtation. In the ſolitude of intenſe and conſtant ſtudy, he had learned from mouldy archives

archives the firſt annals of the republic, and its progreſſive ſteps towards power. Thoſe revolutions which ariſe from the ſucceſſion of time, like the flux and reflux of the ſea, all were noted in his memory. His mind, equally active and indefatigable, labours for the welfare of his country during thoſe hours that idle youth are buried in ſleep. He circulates the public revenues through the whole nation, as the heart ſends forth its ſtreams to nouriſh the extremeſt members. He is acceſſible to all, and his words breathe conſolation: he lives the friend of virtue, and the darling of virtuous men.

We too have a Cato whoſe example forms a lively contraſt to the corruption of the age: it is true that neither the influence of the law nor of his example has been able to ſtem the reſiſtleſs torrent of luxury and diſſipation. But as a ſolid bank repulſes the ſtrong efforts of the foaming billows, and yields not though the waves roll over it and deluge the neighbouring land; ſo does our Cato preſerve his unſhaken firmneſs againſt the aſſault of foreign manners, which have brought into his country vices formerly unknown. He retains the ſimplicity of thoſe ancient times when honeſty ſuperſeded politeneſs, when virtue was reſpected though in a humble garb. He is not deceived by the low tricks of cunning, nor awed by power, nor ſwayed by intereſt: his ears are open to the complaints of the unfortunate, and he will ever ſhew compaſſion when it is not at the expence of juſtice: he is the firm friend of his country, and the enemy of nothing but vice.

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O moſt ineſtimable man! O that thou mighteſt be preſerved to us for ever, that thou mighteſt be the guide of our deſcendants, as thou haſt already been of our fathers! Where ſhall be our reſource when thou art gone? When thoſe vigilant eyes are cloſed in death, who ſhall watch over the welfare of the ſtate? Where ſhall we find another ſpirit enlightened by knowledge and warmed by exalted ſentiments; one who may inherit not only thy ſtation but thy virtues alſo?

Never, never ſhall ſuch a one be found. See *Appius*, whoſe proud looks and arrogant behaviour declare the ſenſe he feels of the dignity of his ſtation. Few are admitted within the gates of this great man; and if he deign to look upon you, it muſt be conſidered as a ſingular favour. He makes juſtice yield to his authority, and the execution of his commands is conſidered as a duty. But though he domineers over others, he is by no means maſter of himſelf. Take from *Appius* the luſtre which ſurrounds him, and nothing would remain to diſtinguiſh him from the common herd. This wretch, ſwelled with vanity and pride, ſcarcely poſſeſſes common talents: he may be compared to a ſtately ediſice whoſe apartments are all unfurniſhed.

Shall *Sulvius* be the ſucceſſor of Cato? *Sulvius* the gallant of the ladies, whoſe infallible taſte is conſulted in the revolutions of faſhion and the value of toys? To be ſure, the colour of his dreſs is always brilliant, and its cut in the neweſt taſte. Paris is his authority upon all occaſions. How elegantly he handles the cards! how gracefully he places his foot! how he ſings! how he

he ſwears! O brave ſupport of thy country! where elſe ſhall we find a youth who has ſo many talents to bluſh for?

*Democrites* is the univerſal legatee of the public: he is acquainted with all his countrymen as with his own family: he knows every different alliance, foreſees the event of every new election, and counts the votes with the moſt unerring exactneſs. To-day he ſhakes me by the hand, and promiſes to uſe all his intereſt in my favour; to-morrow that promiſe is transferred to another. When he paſſes judgment, it is in favour of a friend; when he yields up an employment, it is in exchange for one more lucrative. When a relation is to be enrolled in the liſt of citizens, he ſpares no pains in accompliſhing the buſineſs: he runs, he ſolicits, he flatters, he will enter into any engagements, and every ſtranger is his moſt dear friend.

Of all the revolutions which have taken place in our manners, none is more offenſive to old *Ruſticus* than our having diſcontinued the habit of exceſſive drinking. This heart of oak, who deteſts every modern whim, ſtill ſpeaks and drinks like his anceſtors. 'Tis in the cellar that you muſt take an eſtimate of his talents: there, with his glaſs in his hand, his diſcerning eye diſcovers with unerring exactneſs the vintage of each different wine. Univerſal knowledge is too much for the attainment of humanity: you muſt not expect *Ruſticus* to be accompliſhed in the arts and ſciences, to underſtand the policy of commerce, the intereſts of his country, or the duties it may exact of him: theſe are

trifles

trifles beneath his attention. Let the world change as it will, *Ruſticus* is immovable. What ſignifies juriſprudence? Mere borrowed pedantry! Law, with *Ruſticus*, is that which pleaſes him; equity, that which he is able to comprehend. To find fault is the privilege of a citizen; and "ſtranger" is, with *Ruſticus*, a term of the moſt contemptuous reproach.

Let us paſs over ſuch men as the acrid *Sicinius*, that leaven in a ſtate, who uſurps the excluſive poſſeſſion of wiſdom and good-ſenſe. No ſentiments are worthy of attention but thoſe which are expreſſed by him; and he would cenſure even his own opinion in the mouth of another. Determined to ſpy defects in the conduct of others, he will blame them for too great ſeverity, or for an indulgence which gives encouragement to vice: he will compare our political aſſemblies now to the diets of Zoug, now to the council of ten at Venice. How ſhall we ſatisfy this genius? Let us grant, or let us refuſe, ſtill it is either unmerited or unjuſt. He is like the wretched frogs, which croak as loudly beneath a ſmiling noon as 'mid the vapours of a lowering night.

Blinded by the tinſel ſplendour of a court, you, *Eliodorus*, are aſhamed at not being born the ſubject of a great king: a golden chain makes you forget your country: that liberty acquired by the bravery of our anceſtors, and ſealed with the blood of the *Quixotic* Charles, is to you but a vain chimera. A little ſtate is contemptible, below the grand ideas of *Eliodorus*, who is too elevated to ſtudy the laws, or to aſſiſt in the councils of his country. Deſpicable ſlave, fly to thy beloved

beloved deſpotiſm! In a free government we only wiſh for ſouls that are free; and thoſe who love the yoke are unworthy to rule them.

Shall we ſet a higher value upon *Heriphilus? Heriphilus*, that partiſan of every ſect, who adopts alternately their ſeveral extravagant opinions without abiding by one of them! Now the protector of knaves and religious hypocrites, he undertakes to juſtify opinions that are dangerous to the ſtate, and to plead for thoſe who have acted under their influence: he finds excuſes for their ignorance, and praiſes their pious ſimplicity, in order to relax the ſeverity of their incenſed judges. Now does *Heriphilus* attack by equivocal diſcourſes the received opinions and the eſtabliſhed worſhip of the church, and calumniate with malicious pleaſure the miniſters of religion. Yet this boaſted zeal for the glory of God is frequently but a covering to deeper deſigns. *Heriphilus* is not unmindful of thoſe advantages he affects to deſpiſe; and whilſt his ſoul appears wholly occupied in heavenly contemplations, his hands are not idle in collecting the good things of this world.

Who then ſhall be our reſource? One, an inflexible fanatic, would drive us to heaven by his own favourite road: another, gloomy and inſuſceptible, can only ſmile when he hears the condemnation of a criminal: here is a blockhead that trembles during debate, and jeſts when he is to take a ſolemn oath: there is a reeling ſot, who, in a fit of ceaſeleſs intoxication, goes from the bottle to the council-board, and from the council-board again returns to the bottle. Some are for ever covered with

a maſk; they careſs every one, and hate all they careſs: others, happy in their rental, deſpiſe all knowledge, and even glory in their ignorance. Let us paſs over thoſe inſignificant beings who approve all they hear, who can only give their opinion in writing, and whoſe thoughts muſt have been always previouſly ſuggeſted by another. Crowds of theſe ſwell the train of great men; mere cyphers, which derive all their value from the figure which precedes them.

How can a nation proſper under ſuch guides?—Something more than empty ſkulls is requiſite to the government of a ſtate. Let us diſmiſs ſuch crude geniuſes to practiſe, for at leaſt ten years to come, in the republic of boys, and to debate on matters within their comprehenſion.

Do you aſpire to be a ſervant of the ſtate? would you, by gradual improvements in virtue and in knowledge, attain to the rank of a terreſtrial god? let the public welfare be your conſtant aim: forget your own private intereſt, and regard yourſelf only as an inſtrument in the hands of Providence to promote the general good: aim at no reward but the internal ſatisfaction of having done well: make yourſelf thoroughly acquainted with your duties, and be faithful in the performance of them.

Let the man who would raiſe himſelf to eminence by merits uſeful to his fellow-citizens, ſtudy above all things the ſtrength and the conſtitution of the ſtate of which he is a member; let him learn well the policy of thoſe wiſe combinations that ſubſiſt in the gradual diſ-

tribution of authority and power, and which tend to the maintenance of general order and individual ſecurity; let him inform himſelf of the ancient treaties and alliances (that legacy of more virtuous times) which are the foundation of peace and national faith: let this true patriot know what are the reſources of his country by learning the ſtate of its population, its revenues, and the particular ſprings whence thoſe revenues flow; let him inform himſelf of thoſe immediate cauſes which firſt gave to the ſtate proſperity and power; let him ſtudy the early wars of our anceſtors, and the means which have conducted them to victory. The defects of the political conſtitution, thoſe hidden humours which, in the boſom of ſecurity, deſtroy its internal frame, the influence of cuſtom, and the bounds of liberty; all theſe ſhould be the ſubjects of deep and continued reflection. He ſhould ſtudy the means of ſtopping by a determined courage the dangerous progreſs of inſolent corruption; he ſhould conſider what is the degree of control that the legiſlature may with juſtice exerciſe over the doctrines of the church, and what is the art of preventing ſchiſms without having recourſe to a cruel intolerance; he ſhould be acquainted with the productions of his native ſoil, with the emoluments to be derived from national induſtry, and with the means of ſupplying the real wants of his fellow-citizens by exchanging the productions of their lands for their neighbours' gold.

The man I am deſcribing ſhould extend his reſearches beyond the limits of his native land; he ſhould be ac-

quainted with the oppoſing intereſts of the European ſtates; he ſhould be maſter of all thoſe circumſtances which may render France formidable, or accelerate her decay; he ſhould be informed of all thoſe influences which, among the Engliſh, contribute to the nouriſhment of ſcientific taſte and military ardour; and, from the annals of Rome and Sparta, he ſhould collect the great examples of public virtue.

O ye in whoſe ardent ſouls glows the deſire of univerſal praiſe, ſtudy to *deſerve* as well as to attain it! Be it your prime care to rectify your hearts; eſteem knowledge, but give to virtue her due ſuperiority. No happineſs can exiſt without internal peace; and if this fail us, it can be only through our own fault. It is true that well-earned riches can be no diſparagement to the wiſe man; but how luſtrous is the ornament of merit compared to the ſplendour of wealth and titles! Moderation and Philoſophy are not empty names: the virtues of Antoninus glorified his regal ſtation.

Let nothing influence you to a neglect of your duties; let your private intereſt give place to that of the public; let your happineſs be derived from promoting the happineſs of others, not from attracting their praiſes. Serve your fellow-citizens, but devote yourſelf to no individual. Weigh in an impartial balance the boaſtful demands of the great, and the humble complaints of the poor. In elections, conſider the qualities of the candidate, not the advantages you may derive from his ſucceſs. Take pleaſure in your employment, and let the good of others be the only motive of your ſervices.

Such

Such is the true path to glory. Even if you obtain not the admiration of men, your actions cannot be hidden from God. If deſtiny place you in an elevated ſtation, and inveſt you with public truſt, live ſo as to merit the veneration of remote poſterity.

So ſhall your funeral be honoured by the ſincere grief of a whole people; ſo ſhall you be remembered as the father and protector of your country. In my eyes you would be the firſt of heroes; I ſhould look upon you as the inſtrument of God's immediate bounty: far beneath your glorious path would ſhine the vain ſplendour of conquerors!

## *SATIRE II.*

THE

## MAN OF THE PRESENT AGE.

O YE, whoſe example inſpires nought but the love of virtue; ye, in whoſe diſcourſes we behold reaſon ſurrounded by the graces; who, to adorn the precepts of wiſdom, call forth that wit, that gaiety, which is but too often proſtituted in the cauſe of vice; whence ariſes, I ſay, whence ariſes that ſtupid inſenſibility which benumbs and freezes the heart of man? The very name of virtue will ſoon be forgotten; already ſhe is conſidered as a mere fable; morality is numbered among the follies of knight-errantry. When we read of men who, for others' good, have abſtained from pleaſures within their reach, or who have dared to beſtow their affections on any other object than themſelves, what ſentiments are excited? None but thoſe of the moſt lively ridicule.

The baleful breath of the ſcoffer, which ſwells the triumph of arrogance and folly, has confounded all our ideas of moral diſtinction: men are grown aſhamed of virtue,

virtue, and pay their homage to the ſhrine of vice. In Paris the unbridled youth arm themſelves with ridicule againſt talents and probity: their licentious pleaſantry biaſſes our judgments againſt the direction of nature; and thus merit, inſtead of gaining its due honour, is expoſed to contempt, while the moſt atrocious actions, proclaimed with daring impudence, obtain more celebrity than diſgrace.

How encouraging to virtue was that ſuffrage of public opinion which in happier times it was certain to attract! Dignity of mind and modeſty of deportment, piety and patriotiſm, ſuch were the qualities that procured general praiſe. The man of faſhion was he who conducted himſelf with affability to his inferiors, with a noble firmneſs to thoſe above him; who deſired riches only as the means of enlarging his beneficence; who was impartial in his judgments; who devoted his mind to profound and liberal ſtudies to the excluſion of all frivolous purſuits, and whoſe affections could only be obtained by merit. By ſuch a man the good counſel, even of an adverſary, was cheriſhed; and the law was ſtill revered, though it condemned his choſen friends: though continually occupied, he was never too much engaged to attend to all who had claims upon him. Eagerneſs for pelf had not yet repreſſed a thirſt for true glory. Equally free from the imprudent heat of zeal, and that baſe timidity which ſhrinks at the ſlighteſt oppoſition, the public intereſt was the firſt object of his conſideration.

O happy and virtuous times, why are ye ſeen no more?

more? Shall we never again behold a ſociety of men who, by a ſteady devotion to the public intereſt, raiſe themſelves and their nation to glory; who ſeek no other protection than their own merit; and who prefer the favour of their fellow-citizens to all other recompenſe?

But in vain would deſtiny beſtow on this degenerate age men ſo ſublimely endowed: they would for ever remain in obſcurity, unleſs they poſſeſſed riches to bring them into notice; unleſs they dazzled us with their taſte and luxury; unleſs they were accompliſhed in doing the honours of a feaſt, and could intoxicate their gueſts with foreign liquors: but if they were known to perform their duties independent of all private intereſt, if they wore their hearts upon their lips, we ſhould diſmiſs ſuch old-faſhioned men to the fifteenth century, to the plough and to barley bread.

What conduct then muſt we purſue to be accepted by the preſent age? Shall we reſemble *Leander?* be eminent among libertines, attract the attention of beauties, lead the *ton* in manners and deportment? It is true *Leander's* figure is ſomewhat indebted to his taylor; but as for his head, it is only Paris which could ſupply its ornaments: for ſuch heads a city leſs celebrated could neither furniſh *friſeurs* ſufficiently accompliſhed, nor powder in ſufficient plenty. With what courage does *Leander* challenge fortune at the gaming-table, when the half of his income is dependent on a ſingle card! and when, in the ſilence of night, he ſallies from the tavern, heated with wine and ſurrounded by his

his riotous companions, how nobly does he diſplay his intrepidity! The windows fly in broken fragments; noiſe and confuſion intrude upon the hour of calm. Woe to the luckleſs watchmen, againſt whoſe unloaded arms *Leander* exerciſes his valour, that valour which his country's enemies have never known!

Oh, but he is young; what would you have him do? He ſleep? why he roſe not before noon. You would have him uſefully employed? Oh!—*he is a gentleman.* Or ſhould he read? intolerable! nothing ſo dull as books. In the ſociety of modeſt women one always feels conſtrained: what then can he do without gaming, wine, and women of pleaſure?

Honour is *Leander's* idol: to that he would ſacrifice every thing: at play one might win more than he poſſeſſes; he would borrow to fulfil his engagements. It is true his tradeſmen muſt have patience; his creditors may weary themſelves with demanding entrance at his gates; and the poor, who crave relief there, will obtain no anſwer but an angry diſmiſſion.

How warm are *Leander's* profeſſions of friendſhip! "Your intereſts are mine," exclaims he with energy to one who ſolicits his good offices; "ſhould it ever "be in my power, you may depend—" His friend leaves him, bleſſing the hour of their firſt acquaintance: but when, beneath the preſſure of diſtreſs, he returns to demand one tenth part of the promiſes which have been ſo laviſhly given, *Leander* coldly ſays, "It is not "the proper time—I ſhall ſee what can be done for "you—but another day would"—and concludes with

diſmiſſing

diſmiſſing his diſappointed claimant to the care of his own affairs.

How brilliant is *Leander* in his little circle! what wit! what repartee! burſts of applauſe echo to all he utters. Change but the ſcene, draw him from his party, and he is loſt like a fiſh upon dry land. When he can meet with none to laugh at his *double entendres*, when he is expected to ſhew good ſenſe, all his powers forſake him.

But what ſignifies the opinion of thoſe miſerable pedants who require us to reflect upon what we ſay? *Leander's* aim is to ſucceed with the ladies; among them he is irreſiſtible: he revels in their charms, commands their fortunes; but ſoon will his flame die in the very boſom of favour, unleſs kept alive by the influence of gold. As the inſect flies from the boſom of the roſe to deſcend upon the firſt dunghill, ſo does *Leander* ſink into the arms of an abandoned wretch to calm the paſſion which Themires has kindled. The reſtraints of honour, natural juſtice, morality, and the laws, ſuch are the bugbears of ſuperſtitious ſouls—— *Leander* ſoars above them: if the wife or daughter of his deareſt friend were to excite his infamous deſires, *Leander* would triumph in ſeducing them—too brave for the feelings of remorſe, the wound which pierced the heart of his friend would make no impreſſion upon his.

"What a ſhame!" cries an old man with indignation, "ſhall this raſh fool, ſtained with every vice, uſurp "the name of a man of honour? No: if you ſeek "merit,

"merit, let *Portius* be your model; he is worthy to "give an example to the whole world." Reſerved in his deportment, circumſpect in his conduct, active in buſineſs, and diſdaining not its ſmalleſt emoluments, his behaviour is directed by prudence, his charities and his indulgencies are equally bounded by the moſt rigid precepts of economy: he is ſo conſtant an attendant upon public worſhip, that he would not miſs a ſingle ſermon: his *forte* is buſineſs: no banker is more learned in all money tranſactions; he has at his fingers' ends the calculations upon daily intereſt, and always knows when to profit by the delays and formalities of the law, and when to avoid its expenſive deciſions. *Portius* would rather haſten the ruin of a debtor to-day, than run the ſmalleſt hazard of being his dupe forty years hence. He prudently hoards up the grain againſt a time of ſcarcity; and when public miſery enſues, he has at leaſt the conſolation of having made his own fortune.

Arm this man with the ſword of juſtice, and you ſhall behold with what ſteady ſeverity he will purſue delinquents. *Portius* is well convinced that plenty renders the people inſolent and licentious; he will therefore pluck up that evil by the very root.

Haſten, ye citizens, to pay homage to this great man! If *you* neglect him, he will not forget himſelf; and if his merit cannot raiſe him to the pinnacle of fortune, neither cunning nor a proper aſſurance will be wanting for the purpoſe of attaining it. To be acquainted with the credit of thoſe in power; with the balance

of

of parties; with private intereſt and family connections; to make uſe of promiſes and profeſſions of requital; to intrigue, to threaten, to treat, and, if neceſſary, to bribe; ſuch are the ſecret ſprings of that uſeful policy which is to raiſe us from the duſt, and to draw upon us the richeſt gifts of fortune. By ſuch means has *Portius* raiſed himſelf: blame him who dares—let ſilent envy pay her unwilling homage at his feet—*Portius* is obliged to no man but himſelf; this ſage is his own guiding ſtar: too much delicacy leads not to fortune: when it is within our own power to obtain riches, it is folly indeed to make choice of indigence.

But let us ceaſe to jeſt: the evil is too profound to admit of pleaſantry: it ſecretly, and with a rapid progreſs, undermines the ſtrength of the nation. Cato extends his cenſures beyond a ſatire upon *Clodius*. Oh what times, what dreadful times, when we are proud of our very vices! What is there wanting to a perfect reſemblance of Rome, but that we ſhould aſſaſſinate with impunity? How many criminal follies were unknown among us before an intercourſe with neighbouring ſtates, who were ſunk in corruption, led us into the habit of committing them! The mediocrity of our fortunes then denied us the extravagant gratifications of luxury, and the ſimplicity of our manners left us in happy ignorance of the refinements of ſelf-indulgence. Oh, how fortunate was our republic ere a ſucceſſion of ſplendid victories raiſed her upon the ruins of her enemies! The ſmall encloſure of her boundaries was inhabited by truly

truly great men, who, before they had ſubjects, were worthy of governing. They revered God; they loved their country; and liberty was glowing in their hearts. Corruption was not then a public traffic, and we did not glory in diſhoneſty. Now, grown effeminate by a lengthened peace, we ſlide down that fatal declivity where we ſee every ſtate deſcend which has attained the ſummit of its greatneſs. The hearts of the citizens, the ſoul of the ſtate, the very nerves of the country, all relax, all are corrupted. Our hiſtory ſhall one day evince to poſterity, that when the morals of a ſtate are ſubverted its fall is inevitable.

## *THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.*

### CANTO I.

I STOPPED on a pleaſant eminence to enjoy the cool ſhade of a ſolitary thicket, near which a river, fed by unfailing ſprings, purſued its winding courſe. An immenſe horizon opened before me, whoſe boundaries, which the *Jura* ſkirted with a blue ſhade, the eye could hardly diſtinguiſh. In the whole of this vaſt picture, the ſharp colouring of the fallow grounds is relieved by the ſoft verdure of the woods and hillocks. The *Aare* in its bending courſe reflects a trembling light: near its banks, the capital of *Nutonia*, dear reſidence of peace and ſafety, preſents her boſom, that boſom which the hoſtile ſword has never pierced. Plenty and contentment prevail: the labourer enjoys in freedom the fruit of his toils.

Near the eye, the land is covered with flocks of ſheep, which eagerly browze the herbage; farther off, the heavy oxen are ſtretched upon the plain, ſlowly ruminating the bloſſomed clover; while the horſe, freed from his bridle, tramples at liberty thoſe fields which his labours have helped to cultivate. What a ſweet diverſity of tint in the tall ſhadowy foreſts, and the thickets

thickets which are ſcattered among them! what various effects in their ſhadows croſſed by the ſunny rays which dart through their foliage! what a charm in the ſilence of theſe woods! and oh, what ſweeter charm in hearing echo repeat the voices of ſo many happy creatures who chant forth their own enjoyments!

By my ſide runs a clear river, ſoftly murmuring through banks of flowering herbage: farther off, it daſhes impetuouſly into the hollows of the rocks, and its waters changed into pearls are ſcattered in the air. Upon the ſurface of a large lake, ſhines, like a buckler of adamant, the image of the ſun, whilſt the orb itſelf is veiled from mortal eyes by its dazzling ſplendour, becoming inviſible through the exceſs of its own light. Behind an immenſe encloſure of hills and rocks, towering far above vulgar mountains, the Alps lift their proud heads, inacceſſible even to the eagle's flight, and crowned with the clouds of heaven. A dazzling ſnow reſts upon their ſummits, which the ſurrounding colours embelliſh with the tint of roſes.

A delightful tranſport ſeized upon my heart—"Doubtleſs," cried I, "theſe various objects diſplayed "before my ſight, the profound expanſe of blue, the "immeaſurable flood of ether in which our globe is "ſuſtained, that ſplendid clothing which inveſts it, "thoſe ſilvery veils which are ſpread above the atmo-"ſphere, all that is offered to my view ſprings from the "goodneſs of Providence. This world was created "purpoſely for the benefit of its inhabitants. Nature

" is animated with univerſal beneficence: all things " bear the impreſſion of a hand infinitely good."

While I yielded to the reflections which aroſe from theſe happy ideas, the ſhades of night overſpread the horizon. In a ſolitude ſo favourable to meditation, my thoughts flowed in uninterrupted courſe: at length my mind, led aſtray by a rapid ſucceſſion of images, formed oppoſite concluſions upon the whole that was preſented to it. " Is this the world," cried I, " of which the wiſeſt dare to complain, and which " madmen affirm to be the abode of miſery? where " more than one Mandeville miſconceives the traces " of divine goodneſs? where the principle of action is " attributed to wickedneſs, and where ſenſibility is con- " founded with ſorrow?"

Great God, what a ſcene of miſery is unfolded to my view! Horror freezes my veins. This world, viewed in its intellectual light, preſents nothing but a hell! Does all this guilt and miſery announce the empire of a God?

I behold the feeble race of mortals engaged by empty projects of enjoyment, and vexations too well realized. Conſumed by eager deſires, and deceived by a vain hope of their fruition, they advance towards a fearful eternity. In vain does their imagination ſpring forward to catch at happineſs in the ſhort paſſage through this reſtleſs life: happineſs for ever eludes their ſearch. As a fiery vapour riſes from a moraſs to deceive the wandering traveller, ſo do illuſive

pleaſures,

pleaſures, preſented by prejudice and embelliſhed by deſire, lead us by winding and weary ſteps to the abyſs of miſery.

Every man endeavours to draw from foreign ſources that pure contentment which can only be found in his own ſoul. For ever haunted by the phantom of inſatiable want, we hope for refuge in labouring to ſatisfy it, but relax under the oppreſſive toil. In vain we depend on reaſon to guide the helm in this ſtormy ſea; we are toſſed at the will of our paſſions; and, ſoon or late, either driven among barren ſands or daſhed againſt the rocks, we leave the ſad wreck of our veſſel on ſome faithleſs ſhore.

Who is that favoured mortal that can count one day out of a thouſand which leaves no ſad remembrance upon his mind, no indelible trace of bitter repentance? What then avails to us the magnificence of the univerſe, whilſt a boſom enemy ſteals away our enjoyments; whilſt the poiſoned fountain of grief remains within our hearts, and our reſtleſs mind carries its own torment within?

O that the ſhort term of this life might conduct us to the end of our ſorrowful exiſtence! But reaſon permits us to look beyond; and God announces a future ſtate yet more terrible, from which not the tomb itſelf can ſave us. When the ſoul, exhauſted by a long ſeries of miſeries during its exile in this body, ſhall be at length ſet free, it is threatened with redoubled ſufferings. Deſpair ſhall enwrap it in unaſſuageable torments, and the privilege of its immortality ſhall become

the dreadful means of prolonging its puniſhment to eternity. Then, expoſed to the divine vengeance, for ever deprived of inward peace, for ever ſeparated from the objects of its paſſions, overwhelmed with preſent ſufferings and terrors for the future, muſt this wretched ſpirit groan at exiſtence without hope of being freed from it.

Unhappy mortals, beings predeſtined to miſery, why did the great Creator call you from annihilation to exiſtence? Were you buried in the profound darkneſs of chaos, in the univerſal ſilence of the firſt eternity . . . . . .

O God of mercy, thy unſearchable will governs this univerſe in a myſterious calm: thy ſublime decrees are under thy ſeal: who ſhall dare to break it? All I can conceive of thee is this, that goodneſs makes thy eſſence; that mercy, grace, and love are thy firſt attributes. Father of being, thou, like the ſun, ſpreadeſt light and life upon all creatures. Our afflictions and our puniſhment can never be pleaſing to thy all-merciful ſpirit. It is love, not anger, which has made thee prefer creation to chaos. Thou didſt call into exiſtence beings capable of happineſs; and the completion of that felicity of which thou art thyſelf the ſource didſt thou derive from beſtowing it on them. O why, moſt holy being, why was it thy will to create a world ſubject to guilt, and deſtined to puniſhment? Could thy infinite wiſdom ſuggeſt no plan whoſe perfection was conſiſtent with the happineſs of the creature?

But whither leads my raſh enquiry? We are called hither

hither to act, not to know; ſuch is the will of God: he commands us to ſhun evil, not to employ ourſelves in uſeleſs efforts to find out the deſign of its admiſſion: yet when a preſumptuous mind, ſtruck by the prevailing guilt and miſery of this world, ſhall dare to infer the imperfection of its Maker, and by his falſe reaſonings ſhall miſlead the ſimplicity which liſtens to him; muſt he be ſuffered to triumph over truth? ſhall he calumniate the Deity without kindling our zeal againſt him? ſhall faith remain inactive while error arms itſelf with all the force of perſuaſion?

Truth is not yet ſo obſcured but her rays can penetrate through the miſts which envelop us, and diſſipate all the illuſions of error: her voice is heard in this world, and its meek ſimple accents prevail over all the eloquence of falſehood.

O holy truth, deſcend from thy native heaven! Deign to enlighten my underſtanding, and to guide my pen! My ſong is conſecrated to thy glory: favour it with that myſtic harmony which may touch the ſouls of my hearers.

## CANTO II.

TIME has begun: whole ages have glided away into the boſom of eternity: their ſource is in the will of God alone. Before their exiſtence was determined, he had choſen to manifeſt his grace and power upon the

the theatre of a univerſe. His eye at once comprehended the plans of all poſſible worlds; his choice was fixed on the moſt perfect, and this world appeared. The powerful voice of the Creator called forth living beings from the boſom of annihilation. A moving power agitates the particles of matter which are ſcattered amidſt the void of immeaſurable ſpace: the incongruous elements ſeparate from each other, and unite again to receive a determinate form. An attractive force compreſſes the ſolid parts. The fires of heaven are kindled; light ſhines and expands itſelf. Round new ſuns (each fixed in its deſtined place) dark globes begin to revolve: they are ſuſtained in their orbits by two oppoſite powers, one of which conſtantly tends to throw them from their centre, and the other to lead them back to it. Thus God put to his work the ſeal of his approbation.

But inſenſible matter cannot participate of divine intelligence. Beings are required to whom God may reveal himſelf. He calls ſpirits into exiſtence, and his breath inſpires them with ſentiment and ideas. Innumerable legions of theſe new beings, informed with thought, are diſtributed into various orders, differing by the gradations of their power, their intelligence, and their glory; and they form an immenſe chain, even from the inanimate duſt to the throne of God itſelf.

Intelligent beings of every claſs are animated, each in its due degree, with the deſire of that happineſs ſuited to their ſeveral ſtates. The greateſt perfection of which the ſpecies is capable, is that to which the deſires

deſires of all beings tend by a natural impulſe: yet, their will being only reſtrained by the delicate chain of this native tendency, they may degrade themſelves by forgetting their aim. For, with them, this native bent towards virtue never acts with ſo much force that the ſmalleſt impulſe of the will may not overcome it. God delights not in reſtraint: he preferred this world with all its obvious defects to the blind ſubjection of more perfect beings. Enforced actions have no value in the ſight of God; and he eſteems virtue only as it is the conſequence of a free preference.

God foreſaw that a fallible being left to the guidance of his own underſtanding might eaſily err through the means of this dangerous liberty; he was aware that a limited mind would not always perceive that ſubtle connexion by which a particular propoſition is united with its general principle; and that, blinded by the glittering ſurface of objects, he would be frequently unmindful of the internal void; that the ſtrong impreſſion of a preſent pleaſure would eaſily divert his attention from an abſent and future good; and that his inclinations would rarely preſerve that juſt medium which is ſafe from the encroachments of error and ſin. Doubtleſs a finite being is unable to take a comprehenſive view of that great connecting chain which unites all effects to their cauſes. Omniſcience only can be infallible. Perfect knowledge is neceſſary to infallibility. God foreſaw theſe conſequences, yet he determined to give exiſtence to this univerſe. Could his

holy

holy will fix on any plan but that of the moſt perfect wiſdom?

If in theſe worlds, deſtined to manifeſt the divine attributes, every action were regulated by immutable laws, the whole univerſe would be but an immenſe machine governed by foreign ſprings. Virtue, and the power of falling into error, muſt be annihilated together. God demands our love as the fruit of our knowledge, not as the unavoidable effect of a blind inſtinct: he grants to his creatures the divine privilege of offering a homage of choice, not of ſervitude. Conſtraint would take away all diſtinction between one action and another; our forced adoration would be no longer genuine devotion. The juſtice and mercy of God are ineffectual from the time that he only operates all in all. God yielded the ſpirits he created to the impulſe of their own will, and to the influence which circumſtances obtain over actions; for ever preſerving in his own hand the ſceptre of the univerſe, and the power of ſtopping with a ſingle word the courſe of nature.

Furniſhed with this liberty, the various orders of ſpirits, nobleſt work of a perfect and all-powerful maſter, began to people the new-created worlds. All their faculties tended to good, and they bore in every feature the ſtamp of their divine origin. Every individual poſſeſſed all the perfections of his ſpecies, and the prerogatives of ſome were not privations to the reſt. Thoſe whom the Creator ſets free from material chains, enjoy a more intimate relation to him by the privilege of their glorious nature. O celeſtial ſpirits, it is not given

given to mortals to know you! we find in ourſelves but faint ſhadows of your perfections: we only know, that, lifted above us, you hold the firſt rank in the order of created beings. We receive only by a few organs ſome faint rays of knowledge, which dart through the twilight which ſurrounds us; but you, luminous ſouls, you behold this divine knowledge in all its ſplendour; you enjoy it by a thouſand different ſenſes, and penetrate to all its ſublime depths. Like the blind, who have no idea of colours, we are deprived of the knowledge of many truths which are diſcovered to you; and whilſt our weak diſcernment is ſtopped by an impenetrable veil, you enter into the nature of every object. Doubtleſs the very ſame ideas which cannot leave deep and laſting impreſſions on our tender fibres, are indelible with you, and you ever recall them at will in their primitive ſtrength. Our minds, bounded to narrow limits, cannot contain two thoughts at the ſame time; yours, doubtleſs, comprehend ſo wide a ſpace that a ſingle impreſſion would not fill them. But how can we know entirely the ſublime nature of angels? Whatever it may be, doubtleſs all their faculties tend to good, and their love of virtue is equal to their powers. Their affections centre in God alone: for ever occupied in the love and knowledge of that divine being, they limit all their deſires to rendering him the homage of their progreſs in perfection.

Our mortal race, far below theſe celeſtial ſpirits, partakes equally of divinity and baſeneſs: compoſed of two different natures, deſtined partly to immortality partly

partly to corruption, man holds an equivocal rank between brute and angel. He dies, and ſurvives himſelf. The Creator has not neglected man in his powerful decrees, but, equally with his more perfect works, has deſtined him for happineſs. This world, the reſidence of man, ſaw virtue and gladneſs reign in the youth of her creation. God impreſſed us with his majeſtic image, and deſigned us for ſomething more worthy than the tyrant of animals.

The Creator planted in our hearts two different ſprings of action; thoſe of ſelf and ſocial love. The firſt, leaſt generous, but pure in its origin, is the ſtimulus of our efforts, and the ſource of our perſeverance in them: it exalts us through the means of ambition; it ſuſtains us, in ſpite of the ſeduction of the ſenſes, in the thorny and rapid path of virtue. It watches over our welfare; ſweetens our toils; abſolves us in our repentance, and rouſes us from the ſlumber of idleneſs. It is ſelf-love which inſpires the foreſight to preſerve the ſuperfluities of to-day for the wants of to-morrow: it is this principle which ſtops the raſh career of fury; which arms timidity with courage; and, in the very depth of affliction, makes us feel the value of life. It inſpires us with induſtry to ſeek a reſource againſt hunger by ploughing the boſom of the earth, and a preſervative againſt the inclemencies of weather by appropriating to ourſelves the clothing of the flocks. It is ſelf-love which teaches us to traverſe the immenſe plains of ocean; to ſubjugate the element of fire by the friction of flint and ſteel;

to combat the ſtrength of animals with artificial weapons; and to ſeek in the juices of plants a remedy for our diſeaſes. Aided by this principle, we dive into the ſecrets of nature, and ſtrengthen our ſpontaneous reſources by arts and ſciences. Why, alas! muſt this very ſelf-love, in its imprudent eagerneſs for chimerical happineſs, plunge us ſo often into real misfortunes?

Another more noble propenſity of our nature is that which makes us feel an intereſt in the happineſs of our fellow creatures. There is no trait of that divine image which the Creator has impreſſed on man, which proves more fully its origin than this pure celeſtial flame. It was this which formed the firſt bond of union between man and man; it made men citizens, and aſſembled them in towns. It creates in our melting hearts compaſſion for the ſufferings of others; it incites us to give (even out of that which ſupplies our own wants) to the oppreſſed poor, and enables us to taſte that pure pleaſure deſired by Titus, of making the happineſs of our fellow creatures. It is the ſource of friendſhip, that delightful ſentiment which God pours into our hearts for the higheſt conſolation of human miſery. Even that bliſsful flame which unites two ſouls for their mutual happineſs, that powerful feeling, the firſt tribute of our hearts, is the conſequence of our native propenſity to univerſal benevolence. And that lively attachment to our children, which makes us feel pleaſure in the cares their weakneſs demands from us, that voice of nature, which pleads for their innocent age and can never be heard without internal emotion,

whence comes it but from heaven, where the flame of love is for ever aſcending? O pure and bliſsful flame, which God has beſtowed on man finally to lead him back to himſelf! for never can that eternal propenſity which attracts us towards every object worthy of love be fully ſatisfied but in the poſſeſſion of ſupreme truth, and beauty, and happineſs.

To aid our weakneſs, the Creator has imparted that prompt and vigilant ſenſibility which, eaſily irritated, alarms the whole body upon the ſlighteſt injury, and calls it to its own defence. In that delicate contexture of infinitely ſmall veſſels which diſtribute ſtrength and nouriſhment to every part, the ſmalleſt violence would break the tender links: confidence in health would conduct us to the tomb, if a ſecret ſenſation excited in the marrow of our fibres, the ſource of pain, of pleaſure, of life itſelf, warned us not to avoid an enemy that would ruin us in perfidious ſilence. This ſenſibility contracts our nerves to reſiſt the approach of what is hurtful: it teaches us to correct the too acrid fluids with lenient aliments: by the preſſing ardour of thirſt, it warns us that the too rarefied blood requires the aid of refreſhing liquors. In every diſeaſe to which our frame is liable, pain is the ſad but neceſſary means of ſafety.

But there is yet another ſentiment within us more immediately neceſſary to happineſs even than the ſalutary warnings of pain: it is conſcience, the touchſtone of our actions. This lively and powerful ſentiment was beſtowed by the Creator to point out with unerring

diſtinctneſs

diſtinctneſs all the natural duties. With characters of flame it engraves upon our hearts deteſtation of vice, and bitter reproaches for having yielded to it. Oh! how can man abandon himſelf to evil in the preſence of this watchful monitor? What madneſs to renounce internal peace, and prepare a hell within his own boſom!

Thus enriched with ſelf and ſocial love, with ſenſibility and conſcience, we launch upon the ocean of human life. Each individual is furniſhed with the means of his own happineſs; various talents are meaſured out in various proportions; this inequality is neceſſary to the general good. Does nature produce gold as abundantly as iron? A numerous ſociety compoſed of ſublime geniuſes would be unhappy. In that ſyſtem which Providence has eſtabliſhed, every department is filled by that portion of intelligence which it requires, and every various talent is directed towards a uſeful purpoſe. A man of ſuperior underſtanding, while he exerts his powers only for the advancement of his own fame, may eventually increaſe the happineſs of a whole country; and the peaſant, who cultivates his little field, may adminiſter to the convenience of great men, while he labours only for the ſupply of his own neceſſities. Here, a profound philoſopher ſtudies the attributes of matter and the nature of the ſoul by the gleam of his midnight lamp; there the mother of a family directs her attention to leſs difficult but not leſs important objects, by educating thoſe children which ſhall become citizens of the ſtate. But our judgment of the talents and underſtanding of others is often

too much biaſſed by external appearance. The Creator has given to every man that portion of intelligence which is neceſſary to direct his mind. No human being has ſo little ſentiment as not to be the firſt to condemn his own faults. The Huron upon the frozen ſhores of Michagan acknowledges the rights of relationſhip and juſtice; and the Hottentot beneath the burning zone obſerves the univerſal duties and the laws of nature.

## CANTO III.

O SACRED truth, infallible ſurety of the paſt, ſay what overthrew thoſe gracious deſigns which God had formed for our happineſs? what rendered ſpirits rebellious to their Creator? How can we love vice, and become our own enemies?

Many cauſes haſtened the fall of the different orders of ſpirits. The perfection of ſome was their ruin: their vaſt intelligence blinded them, and they dared to attribute to themſelves thoſe powers which they derived from God. Intoxicated by their own ſplendour, impatient of dependence, they forgot their Creator, to whom alone they owed their glory. Deſire of perfection, exceeding its due bounds, degraded the conſciouſneſs of pre-eminence into pride. Theſe angels ceaſed to love their Creator, and believed, that by their own unaſſiſted efforts they might attain the pinnacle of greatneſs. Whole legions dare to throw off dependence upon

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the Source of being. Their borrowed glory vaniſhes; their faculties are all perverted, and their offended God abandons them to themſelves. They dare to unite together, and ſtrengthen themſelves in ingratitude towards the only object worthy of their devotion. They forfeit ſupreme felicity. Diſcontent embitters their feelings, and clouds their underſtanding with darkneſs. Led aſtray by a falſe confidence in their own ſtrength, ſtill they find within themſelves no ſource of durable felicity. The wrath of God kindles againſt the rebels; confuſion is the reward of pride, and the evil they ſuffer is the conſequence of the evil they have committed. Regrets unproductive of repentance, and deſpair of ever entering again into their former ſtate of glory, become at length the ſad retribution of their criminal audacity.

But legions of angels, ſtill faithful to their God, continue to enjoy in his holy preſence a pure and eternal light. For ever advancing in perfection, they approach nearer and nearer to the Divinity. Their felicity is perfect, for new enjoyments are given to them as new deſires ariſe in their ſouls: their reaſon is nouriſhed with intelligence, and their hearts with delicious ſentiments.

If angels themſelves were led aſtray; if evil had ſufficient power to depopulate heaven, it obtained a far eaſier conqueſt over the feeble race of mortals. Their ſenſes and imaginations are liable to impreſſion from every tranſient object: hence, bright and pleaſurable ideas will be apt to efface ſerious reflections;

and while the mind indulges in a gay or tranquil enjoyment, it turns from the contemplation of virtue, who gradually loſes her empire.

The body, by its intimate union with the ſoul, draws it towards the pleaſures of the ſenſes: reflection yields to voluptuouſneſs, and ſenſibility is injurious to inſtruction. Finite beings are neceſſarily ſubject to error, and ſin is with men the conſequence of error. The ſoul, too weak to govern the paſſions, yields to their empire. The means of our preſervation become poiſon to us: our natural inclinations exceed their due bounds, ſo that, at length, all our heavenly qualities are debaſed. The mutual neceſſities of men now engender mutual ſtrife, while ambition and ſenſual deſires reign within their hearts. 'Tis true the counſels of reaſon and conſcience might ſtop the ſwift progreſs of evil; but their admonitions are diſpleaſing and unheeded, and they have no arms but the ſad privilege of cenſuring.

This is the origin of the corruption of man, which ſucceſſive generations have ſpread abroad. The empire of vice extends to the limits of the world. Ambition, avarice, voluptuouſneſs, treachery, malice who laughs in ſecret at the calamities of others, contempt of merit, calumny the offſpring of envy, ſeduction the betrayer of ſimplicity, baſe gluttony, uſeleſs idleneſs, thirſt of vain glory; all theſe evil propenſities prey like vipers upon the human heart, and deſtroy every ſeed of virtue. Theſe evil monſters appear under various forms; ſome veil themſelves in the ſemblance

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of candour; others, throwing off the maſk, brave our regards, and fright us with their deformity: but this difference is only ſuperficial; it cannot deceive us. The variation of place, of time, of cuſtom, can never change the nature of vicious paſſions; their fountain is ever the ſame, though their progreſs may vary. How vainly does any particular nation boaſt a purer morality than its neighbours, becauſe its advancement in evil may have been ſomewhat delayed! Different climates are prone to different vices, but none are free from vice; and if baſe deſires ariſe in the heart of man, it is of little moment what bauble excites them.

The nature of man muſt be debaſed from the time that he forſakes his God. We cannot deviate from virtue but at the expence of our happineſs. When we yield to vice we are our own enemies, for no earthly pleaſures can heal the wounds of conſcience. Worldly enjoyments are chiefly calculated for the advantage of the body: the ſoul, the eſſential part of man, is wearied with their deluſion. A preſent good never contents us perfectly: when we loſe the animation of deſire, the ſoul becomes void and attached to nothing. We are for ever proving the futility of all human bleſſings. In vain is fate propitious even beyond our wiſhes: the empire of the whole earth would not ſatisfy the deſires of a conqueror. We raſhly purſue fortune without fixing the bounds of our purſuit; and at the end of our career are always ready to begin a new courſe.

Yet, if the general objects of human deſire might be the lot of the greateſt number, our efforts to attain them

them would be more rational, but riches and glory have no value but what ariſes from the diſtinction they procure; and ſince the whole maſs of worldly poſſeſſions is limited, the portion of ſome cannot exceed its due bounds but with detriment to the reſt. Thus thouſands are ſacrificed to the fame of a ſingle hero; whole communities ſuffer by the good fortune of a ſingle individual; and the happineſs of one lover gives deſpair to his rivals. 'Tis our jealous zeal which ſtamps a value on all the falſe bleſſings we contend for with ſo much heat: we are like children who quarrel for a plaything that each would be leſs rejoiced at obtaining than grieved at loſing. Thus do we waſte our time in vain and impatient efforts to ſnatch from Providence by importunity, that which if obtained could not make us happy.

We heap up miſery where we expected joy. Wielding the ſceptre or the ſheep-hook, dwelling beneath the lofty cieling or ſheltered by the cottage thatch, men are by turns frozen with terror, enflamed with anger, torn by impotent reſentments, or conſumed by ſecret vexations; diſturbed in their repoſe by an induſtrious vigilance to torment themſelves; heated by impatience for pleaſure, or languiſhing in the ſadneſs of unſucceſsful love. But O how dreadful is that ſtate when the irritated conſcience becomes the executioner of the ſoul! no rank preſerves us from its wounds; impiety itſelf offers no refuge from its purſuits; its terrible voice echoes through the palaces of tyrants. The huſband of Octavia trembles beneath

beneath his robe of ſtate. In vain does he call on ſleep: recollections of the paſt throng upon his fancy, and preſent an abyſs of puniſhments as the retribution of his deeds.

The corruption of the ſoul is ſoon communicated to the body it inhabits. This nobleſt work of organization, worthy in its perfect ſtate to preſent the image of God, had innocence for its ſafeguard: harmony among all its parts ſet at a diſtance the fatal period of its diſſolution, and had perhaps rendered it immortal; but having partaken in the errors of the ſoul, it alſo partakes the effects of them. Henceforth the natural courſe of life is ſhortened, and men arm againſt each other ſtill farther to abridge it. We traverſe the ſeas, we dig into the boſom of the earth, in order to multiply diſeaſes, ſorrows, and the inſtruments of death. The abuſe of our food converts it into poiſon. Anxieties corrupt the juices of the body, and the fires of voluptuouſneſs deſtroy the ſprings of life. Thus by degrees worn out, corrupted, ſcarcely preſerving ſufficient ſtrength to enable us to ſuffer, the body haſtens towards its primitive ſtate of weakneſs, and ſinks into the grave.

In ſome future period, the ſoul, ſeparated from this body, and detached from all its illuſive influences, ſhall find itſelf in a new world, and ſhall carry into the ſilence and darkneſs of this abode nothing but the odious conviction of its own degraded ſtate. Of all the objects of its inconſiderate paſſions, of all the dreams of its blind vanity, of all the titles of its empty pride,

pride, nothing ſhall remain but fruitleſs regret for their loſs. The ſoul, forced to deteſt its moſt cheriſhed thoughts, and to reſpect thoſe which it formerly deſpiſed, would gladly redeem every miſpent hour by whole ages of repentance. In this new ſolitude nothing diſtracts it from the lively perception of that truth whoſe voice was ſtifled by the tumult of the world. This perception, like a devouring flame, penetrates and ſearches the moſt hidden receſſes of evil. Remorſe is for ever wounding the ſoul by the ſad recollection of its imprudences, its negligences, its faults; it ſuffers unceaſing torments of its own preparing.

But O how different is the ſtate of thoſe bleſſed ſouls whom the contempt of a miſ-judging world has not hindered from eſtimating the true value of all things; who, faithful to that inward voice which threatens for our good, have been influenced in every action by a ſenſe of duty! What rich amends await them in this new deſtiny for the contempts and miſeries they have ſo well ſupported! In that great day when all hearts ſhall ſtand unveiled, they ſhall meet the univerſal gaze with confidence, and their own recollections will be a fore-taſte of heaven. Approved by the Supreme Being (that bleſſing which concentres their pure deſires), they ſhall enjoy in his preſence an endleſs felicity.

Evil uſurped the empire of this world, where the name of God ought to be glorified for our happineſs. Alas! that happineſs is in every rank of life the lot of the ſmalleſt number. Men run by multitudes to their

their own deſtruction; 'tis rare if one eſcape; and to thoſe tranſient pleaſures which none enjoy unmixed, ſucceeds an eternity of unchanging miſery.

O God of mercy and juſtice, if a creature may dare to interrogate thee, how are our afflictions conſiſtent with thy goodneſs? Eternal father! canſt thou delight in beholding the ſufferings of thy children? Was thy love exhauſted? was thy power inſufficient? If no plan could be formed by which the univerſe might be exempt from evil, why didſt not thou prefer chaos to creation?

But, O infinite Being! the ways of thy grace are hidden from us, and thou canſt not be reproached with our blindneſs. Perhaps the ſight of that heavenly truth which is ſo terrible, ſo tormenting to the fallen ſoul, may be the only means of its purification: perhaps a ſincere deteſtation of vice, ſpringing from experience of its fatal conſequences, may for ever fix the will in an attachment to virtue; and the Supreme Judge, accepting a tardy repentance, may finally lead us back to himſelf, and embrace all ſouls in his univerſal benevolence. O how infinite is the benevolence of God! Even while his juſtice threatens, his mercy grieves for our deſtruction! and the happineſs he pours upon the elect ſpirits ſurpaſſes thoſe afflictions which the guilty draw down upon themſelves.

The ways of Providence are inſcrutable, yet they irreſiſtibly lead the ſoul to enquiry! Perhaps this globe, which, like a grain of ſand, ſwims in the vaſt ſea of ether, is the only region of miſery and guilt; whilſt

thoſe

thoſe ſtars which ſhine above our heads are inhabited by glorified beings who dwell beneath the empire of perfect goodneſs. Doubtleſs the very imperfection of this minute point of the univerſe makes up the general harmony of creation. How then ſhall we, who know but the ſmalleſt part of this world, dare to judge of it ſeparately from the whole ſyſtem?

O mortals, if ever for a moment you can doubt the love of God, turn to the contemplation of your own bodies. Is there any thing wanting for the purpoſes of utility or pleaſure? What harmony, what admirable combinations in the ſprings of life! every member adminiſters to the wants of man; each ſeveral part contributes to the preſervation of the reſt. The heart receives the animal ſpirits from the brain, and returns it the blood for nouriſhment. Every movement of this wonderful machine is conducted in the moſt perfect manner; peculiar uſe being ever combined with the principal deſign of the whole. A conſtant circulation ſtimulates and preſerves the animal powers, ſupplying what is continually diſſipated through the pores of the ſkin.

Thus are we invited to contemplate the divine wiſdom and goodneſs in the wonderful conſtruction of our bodies. If the Creator have imparted ſuch powers, ſuch beauty, to that periſhable body which ſhall one day contribute to the nouriſhment of worms, how much more tenderly muſt he have cheriſhed the intereſts of the ſoul, that eſſential and immortal part of man! Is it poſſible that he who has ſo admirably provided for

the welfare of the body ſhould devote the ſoul to miſery?

Great God, thy mercies are infinite! thou haſt impreſſed the whole univerſe with the image of thy love! That hand which feeds the birds of the air ſhall not be neglectful of man; that goodneſs ſo manifeſt in the minuteſt circumſtances we ſhall ſee more fully diſplayed in the ſyſtem of the univerſe.

Great Being, whatever be thy will, it is perfect: our doubts can only ſpring from ingratitude: thy wiſdom equals thy power and goodneſs; all are infinite.

In ſome future period, when the ſoul, gifted with new powers, may dare to gaze on thy divine glory, when the book of deſtiny ſhall be opened before us, and when thou ſhalt deign to reveal to us the myſteries of thy decrees, then, O univerſal Father, we ſhall offer adorations more worthy of thee. Fully inſtructed in thy diſpenſations, we ſhall acknowledge, even in the rigour of thy juſtice, that thy love is directed by wiſdom.

ON

# GLORY.

O GLORY, vain and empty phantom, wherefore art thou ſo eſteemed among men? Antiquity has raiſed altars to thy worſhip; ſtill, ſtill thou art the idol of the univerſe. Chimerical enchantreſs, daughter and handmaid of prejudice, whence ſprings thy ſeducing influence over the human ſoul?

Without thee, the happy people of the golden age would not have exchanged their liberty for fetters; without thee, the proud diſtinctions of rank had not been eſtabliſhed; nor had the fatal ſword been dragged from the entrails of the earth, to become at once the weapon and the vain ornament of pride.

'Tis thou that breatheſt ambitious deſires into the minds of raſh men. If, in ſpite of the ſenſe of our own weakneſs, we ſeek the burden of human dignities, what impels us to it but the hope of finding glory near a throne?

How many armed legions ruſh upon inevitable deſtruction to hear thy voice among the cries of death! Old age itſelf will haſten its ſhort term of exiſtence, hoping that thy rays may gild its tomb.

Thy ſpirit, 'tis true, glows moſt ardent in the ſub-

limeſt ſouls: thou art the patron of the arts, and the ſupport of virtue. The philoſopher himſelf purſues thy footſteps; and when he lifts his eye to ſearch among the ſtars, 'tis thy lamp, O glory, which attracts his gaze more ſtrongly than their wondrous revolutions.

But if mortals could eſtimate thy real value, how ſoon would all thy ſplendour vaniſh from their eyes! Dazzling meteor, we ſeek thee as the ſupreme bleſſing, and an empty ſhadow rewards our pains.

"Young man," cried an ancient ſage to a ſoldier prepared for his expedition, "what impels thee to "purſue danger among the fartheſt regions of the "eaſt? Wilt thou encounter the horrors of war in "order that idle people ſitting at the Athenian feſti-"vals may enquire about thy exploits?"

Such are the ways of men! If no one equal the valour of an Alexander, a thouſand ſurpaſs him in folly. How many will ſacrifice the moſt precious ſeaſon of life to ſpread among ſurrounding nations the empty ſound of their own name!

When my body ſhall become a prey to worms, will it ſooth my ſpirit to be inſcribed the firſt among the victims of war? Ye heroes who have bled for the cauſe of glory, are ye indeed compenſated when her trumpet proclaims your high deeds?

Yours is diſtinguiſhed above the common lot in obtaining this airy reward of your ſufferings. How many who have ſhed their blood with courage equal to yours remain unnoticed among the heaps of ſlain!

When Alexander, verging towards the tomb, ſaw his heaven-derived blood ſtreaming from the wounds, glory counted each drop as it fell: but the companions of his wars, the inſtruments of his victories, their names are buried with them.

But what have they loſt? Is it poſſible that the fame of living in the remembrance of men ſhould excite our feelings after death? Achilles himſelf, whoſe aſpiring valour crowned his young brows with unfading laurels, even he has ſubmitted to the common fate.

Vain deſpots of the ſouth, why raiſe thoſe monuments of grandeur whoſe walls are cemented by the very blood of your ſubjects? why call on glory to feed you with her empty vapours? Wretched beings, deſtined like other men to be the food of worms, know, that the meaneſt peaſant whoſe conſcience is at peace ſleeps more ſweetly upon the deſert turf than you, ſurrounded by your ſlaves, your luxuries, and your treaſures!

Miſtaken mortals! when you behold one among your fellows ſeated upon a throne, and covered with the wreaths of victory, you believe that all his deſires are ſatisfied. Oh, turn your ſuperficial glances upon the inward man from the ſplendour which adorns him, and then judge whether he be an object of envy!

Doubtleſs there is great pleaſure in the conſciouſneſs of meriting that exalted ſtation to which our fortune may have deſtined us; but, alas! what are the ſplendours of royalty but a veil to conceal its reſtleſs cares?

A king is the moſt inſignificant of men, if he perform through

through the medium of others the active duties of his ſtation; and if he purſue that conduct which can alone entitle him to celebrity, how circumſcribed muſt be his enjoyment of private eaſe and pleaſure! To preſerve his kingdom in peace and reſpectability among neighbouring and rival nations, requires the moſt vigorous exertion of mental faculties; and when war, that ſcourge of the human race, becomes at length unavoidable, how ſevere are the duties of the camp and the field! what teſtimonies of courage, of patience, of military talents, are expected by the gazing world in a ſoldier king! nor is the happier ſeaſon of peace exempt from its cares and difficulties. The monarch muſt preſerve within due bounds the influence of each ſeveral power which compoſes his government: he ſhould ſecure to the labouring part of his ſubjects all the benefits of freedom, as an incitement to their induſtry; he ſhould encourage the enterpriſes of the merchant; patroniſe letters, ſciences, the elegant arts; foſter the works of genius by his approving ſmile; and thus, ſurrounded by induſtry, learning, opulence, and all the bleſſings of peace, prepare, in this region of tranquillity, againſt the calamities of war.

Short-ſighted mortals, how ignorant are ye of human happineſs, if a deſire of ſelf-gratification tempt you to wiſh for the deſtiny of this moſt reſpectable monarch! You ſee the ſplendour of his crown while he feels its weight: he is ſubject to a thouſand calamities from which a private ſtation is exempt, but which no human foreſight can avert from him. Rebellion may ſpring

up in the midſt of his kingdom, overturn that ſyſtem of order he has laboured to eſtabliſh, and hurl him from his throne to priſon and to death. Even that wiſe and virtuous character which it has been his firſt ambition to impreſs on the minds of men, may be handed down under falſe colours to poſterity.

But, oh! what name can be ſufficiently infamous for that monarch who reigns the tyrant of his people? The King of kings, under whom he holds his power, ſhall teach him the futility of his empty pride. His crowds of flatterers ſhall not ſcreen him from the thunderbolt, and the curſe of God ſhall light upon his deeds.

How many monarchs have been ſurrounded with glory in the morning, who at night could ſcarcely obtain the funeral obſequies! how many conquerors have eſcaped a thouſand dangers, to die by poiſon which a favourite has adminiſtered!

Antony, the model of accompliſhed princes, gave his confidence to a wretch unworthy of life. Auguſtus, after having triumphed over all his enemies, ſaw his illuſtrious line end in diſgrace by the crimes of his own children.

Hannibal flew with his armies from the burning mountains of Africa to the over hanging rocks of the Alps, ſpreading among the Roman citizens the terror of his name. He ends his martial life, not by the ſword of a brave competitor, but by a ſubtle poiſon prepared by himſelf, to avoid a more diſgraceful fate.

Were deſtiny ſo highly to favour a particular mortal as to accompliſh at once all his deſires, would not new

wiſhes

wiſhes ſpring up in his heart? O yes, the fire of ambition is never extinct; glory ſerves but to nouriſh it.

When Alexander, ſtanding by the Ganges, ſaw its ſtream ſpread like the limits of this world, cloſing the proſpect of farther conqueſts, he wiſhed to overleap the boundaries of nature, to ſeek in worlds unknown ſome new triumph for his vanity.

What then is your reward, ye ſublime ſouls who ſeek true glory in the regions of virtue? Alas! the dark road of vice ſhall conduct you ſoon as the paths of angels, to the ſhrine of immortality.

O why does fame equally celebrate virtue and vice, cowardice and valour? Is it the ſucceſs of a treaſon which ſhould entitle its author to celebrity?

Why are the virtues of an *Habis* * forgotten, while the vices of the Cæſars live in the annals of fame? Alexander is dignified with the title of great, while the names of *Aſcan* and *Ungue* remain in profound oblivion.

What can poſterity admire in theſe illuſtrious conquerors but a madneſs which fortune crowned with ſucceſs? Let us forget the miſeries and deſolations they ſpread around, and by what action ſhall we remember them?

Glory would more rationally be the object of our ambition, were it certain to reward our pains. But,

* *Habis* was King of Spain. *Aſcan* was the founder of the German empire. *Ungue* King of Sweden governed his ſtate peaceably.

alas!

alas! after ſacrificing the prime of life, after exerting all the powers of our minds, after ſhedding our very blood to attain it, ſtill the phantom eludes our graſp, nor till we are mingled with the duſt will its voice dignify our name.

When the conqueror of Babylon found that his diſeaſe was incurable, what availed the praiſes of his courtiers, or all the altars they had erected to him, even in his life-time, upon the ruins of overthrown ſtates?

Vain man! will the remembrance of Arbela ſooth thy acute pains? will the freſhneſs of the laurels which bind thy brow infuſe the glow of health into thy face? Alas, thy former proſperity adds new bitterneſs to thy inevitable fate. Thy kingdoms ſhall be an inheritance to ſtrangers, and before the Lord of the univerſe thou muſt render an account of thy deeds.

O Cæſar, doſt thou exult in thy victories? hopeſt thou to ſubject the world to thy empire? Miſtaken mortal! know that thoſe poniards which are about to pierce thee, were ſharpened by the deſtinies even before thy birth: no human power can avert the ſtroke.

Happy the man who is preſerved by fate from thoſe vain purſuits which intereſt the giddy multitude. In the calm retirement of leiſure, he conſecrates his whole life to wiſdom and to virtue.

O my friend, thou who uniteſt the graces of youth to the virtues of riper years, happy G—! thy days ſhall be clouded by no evils but ſuch as are inevitable.

Thy

Thy dignified and philoſophic mind lifts thee above the reſtleſs deſires of ambition, and the ſpring of unfailing happineſs lives within thy own heart.

What have I left to wiſh for thee? Glory can no more adorn thy beautiful qualities than glaſs can ſet off the luſtre of a diamond. I will only offer thee my conſtant friendſhip. Virtue herſelf will give thee every bleſſing which my kindeſt wiſhes would beſtow.

ON

# ETERNITY.

1736.

ETERNITY, dreadful myſterious eternity, thy image fills my ſoul! Theſe ſhadowy foreſts, impervious to the beam of day, where cluſters of melancholy fir paint the dark night of the tomb; theſe rocks and diſmal caves, ſilent as the abode of death, ſave when the night raven ſcreams his portentous note; theſe rivers, which move ſluggiſhly through barren coaſts, and pour their waves into the deep moraſs; theſe cold and deſert vales; all, all are accordant to my feelings; each diſmal object feeds that profound grief, that trembling horror, which reigns within my ſoul.

My friend is no more: his ſhade ſtill flits before my ſick imagination: I ſee his figure, I hear his voice: but oh, he is far diſtant; he is gone to that region whence there is no return; eternity holds him in adamantine chains.

But to-day he was a calm ſpectator of ſublunary ſcenes; no apprehenſion of the future diſturbed his ſerenity.

ſerenity. The hour ſtrikes, the curtain drops over the picture of this world; to him it is for ever annihilated. That profound night which reigns over the ſilent abode of ſpirits wraps him in its fearful veil: all his enjoyments are vaniſhed; nothing remains, ſave unavailing deſire.

And am I of a more privileged race? No: I have lived like my friend; like him I muſt expect to die. The morning of my life is already gone, the noon approaches; and before the evening come, night may overtake me, that night which ſhall never be ſucceeded by another dawn.

O dreadful immenſe eternity, thou from whom time and creation ſpring, vaſt theatre of the preſent, the paſt is buried in thy immeaſurable gulf, and, from its aſhes, thou raiſeſt inexhauſtible ſeeds of the future!

Who can meaſure infinity? The duration of a world is but as a ſingle hour, the life of man as a paſſing ſhadow. Perhaps a thouſand ſuns have preceded ours, and a thouſand more ſhall ariſe when its flame is extinct: like a clock, moved by ſprings, a new ſun begins his courſe at the divine command; it ſtops, and another ſucceeds to mark the progreſs of time: but thou, vaſt eternity, art unchangeable; time can never diminiſh thy duration.

Thoſe ſtars which continue their majeſtic courſe through a thouſand and a thouſand generations, diſappear before thee like herbs in the ſcorching ſun: *Helice* and the *Pleiads* are roſes of a day!

When the new-born world ſwam on the boſom of chaos;

chaos; before the laws of gravity were fixed, before the firſt flood of light brightened the ſhades of annihilation, thou, O immenſe eternity, wert as far removed from thy origin as thou art at this moment: and when the univerſe ſhall again be buried in chaos, when no veſtige ſhall remain of all thoſe beings for whom it was created; when new heavens, glittering with new ſtars, ſhall have finiſhed their deſtined courſe, ſtill, equally remote from thy end, thou ſhalt have before thee the ſame future of everlaſting duration.

Our imagination, which outſtrips the progreſs of time, the wings of the wind, the rapidity of ſound and light, is exhauſted when it attempts to meaſure thee, and wanders in boundleſs ſpace. I join millions to millions; I heap up innumerable numbers, ages, worlds; and when, from this awful height, I ſtill raiſe my eyes to contemplate thee, O vaſt eternity, all theſe numbers multiplied by new numbers are but an atom of thy immenſity. If I withdraw theſe countleſs ages from thy exiſtence, ſtill it will not be leſſened; ſtill thou art entire, immeaſurable, immutable.

O God, ſole fount of being, thou art that ſun which ever in the zenith, in full ſplendour and unchangeable ſtrength, meaſures the ſucceſſion of immeaſurable time. Every moment is an eternity to thee. If thy power were ſuſpended for one ſhort inſtant, the whole chain of exiſtence would break; chaos would engulf creation as the ocean ſwallows a drop of rain.

O infinite being, what am I in compariſon of thee?

A grain

A grain of ſand in that univerſe which to thee is itſelf but an atom. Yeſterday emerged from annihilation, the half of my exiſtence ſhall to-morrow again return to it. My preſent life paſſes like a dream: can I hope that my final duration will equal thine?

I exiſt not by my own choice or power: thou, O God, haſt formed me from particles foreign to myſelf. When I firſt came into being, I was no more than a plant, without ſentiment and without deſire: for a long time I only poſſeſſed a mere animal exiſtence, though already belonging to the human race. My ſenſes ſtill undeveloped, my ideas limited to ſenſations, I was inſenſible to all the beauties of the univerſe, and underſtood nothing ſave the calls of hunger and the evils of pain. In this inſect ſtate, milk, and a little ſolid food, expand my exiſtence: an interior motion ſets free my languid fibres; frequent falls teach me to walk; I begin to liſp ſounds, and the progreſs of the mind ſucceeds that of the body. I try my new-born powers like a moth animated by heat, who, ſtill half reptile, ſlowly unfolds its wings. Every object ſurpriſes me; every day I gain ſome new intelligence; I recollect the paſt, and foreſee the future. By means of obſerving, combining, chooſing; by experiencing alternately the ſentiments of pleaſure and diſguſt; by committing errors and diſcerning them; by action and repoſe, at length I become a man.

Alas! my frame is already ſenſible of its approaching diſſolution; my limbs ſink beneath the weight of years; joy abandons my faded aſpect to flutter round

the giddy head of youth. Deſpondence ſeizes upon my ſpirits: I am but faintly ſenſible of the charms of returning day; while the ſhades of night, that enwrap all nature in tranquillity, bury me in hopeleſs ſadneſs. At every line I trace my mind ſinks into greater debility, and the ſole inclination which I feel leads me to profound repoſe.

## ON THE MARRIAGE

OF

## HIS EXCELLENCY Mr. STEIGNER,

*Avoyer of the Republic of Berne.*

LET thy ſtrains be renewed, my lyre, upon this day ſo worthy of the Muſes. O that my ſubject might animate my ſong, and render it worthy of poſterity!

I have conceived no frigid deſign: the expreſſions I meditate ſpring from my heart, and make it glow with a noble enthuſiaſm; an enthuſiaſm I would communicate to all who hear me, even to the moſt inſenſible ſouls.

Illuſtrious Steigner, my ſong would repreſent the voice of a whole people which is now lifted up in thy praiſe; it would anticipate the ſentiments of our remote deſcendants, who, if I may believe my preſaging heart, will give due honour to thy memory. O that I had the wings of Pindar! then would I bear thy name to the ſhrine of immortality; then ſhould thy exulting country behold it inſcribed among thoſe of the moſt celebrated heroes.

I will declare my opinion, fearleſs of being cenſured for flattery. That wiſdom which is ſo importantly uſeful to your fellow-citizens; that admirable talent of expreſſing your thoughts with elegant preciſion; thoſe virtues, no leſs amiable than ſolid, which gain the eſteem of your very enemies; that profound political knowledge; all the qualities which adorn your heart and your mind, moſt worthy Steigner! require only a more extended theatre to ſhine in ſuch dazzling ſplendour as ſhould draw upon you the notice, the praiſe, the approbation of the whole univerſe.

Providence delights in ſhowering its choiceſt gifts on thoſe men who are endowed with ſuperior intellect and ſuperior virtue. This, O Steigner, is illuſtrated in thee: thou haſt been gradually raiſed from a moderate ſtation to the higheſt offices in the ſtate: ſuch elevation is truly honourable: titles are no longer empty ſounds when beſtowed as the reward of merit.

Yet, alas! all that external ſplendour which is attendant upon exalted rank, is but a tinſel covering to inward diſcontent. The human heart muſt be void, reſtleſs, and melancholy, till its genuine affections be ſatisfied. A prince who ſolely devotes himſelf to the good of his people is the only man who cannot enjoy the preſent recompenſe of his virtues. Unhappy mortal! he has no refuge from his cares in the tender delights of love.

But you, illuſtrious Steigner! you, who devote your life and your labours to the welfare of the ſtate, your lot ſhall afford a ſtriking example of happineſs juſtly merited.

merited. If the weight of public cares, if anxious and active vigilance for the good of your country, have been hitherto the portion of your life, deſtiny now decrees, that he who (under Heaven) has been the creator of our felicity ſhould alſo partake it. On her whom you have choſen for your companion, moſt worthy Steigner, nature ſeems to have beſtowed all the amiable graces for your ſake: her cheerfulneſs and kindneſs; her ſprightlineſs, chaſtened by modeſty; her devotion and tender love to you; all, all declare her a bride worthy of your choice, and promiſe you an unfailing ſource of peace and pleaſure.

O happy thoſe who, like you, have merited their proſperity! Heaven is auſpicious to the wiſhes of their fellow-citizens in crowning their old age with bleſſings. O Steigner, that you could read our hearts, and know thoſe ardent prayers which we offer for your ſafety and your happineſs! O that you could behold that ſilent joy which this day excites in the breaſt of many an orphan! Theſe, through ſucceſſive years, have called down the bleſſing of Heaven upon you; a bleſſing which ſhall ſhortly be renewed upon your poſterity.

O may that vigilant eye long watch over us! long may your powers remain in full vigour! far removed be that period when you ſhall withdraw from the execution of public affairs! Still, O illuſtrious Steigner, ſtill may you live among us, and behold liberty and peace flouriſh among our children! So many ſervices, ſo many virtues, merit a renovation of youth, and the acknowledgments of ſucceſſive ages. The ſtate and

the people, who revere your name, feel what would be their loſs in being deprived of you, and, earneſt ſtill to poſſeſs you, are unwilling you ſhould depart to receive thoſe eternal bleſſings which ſhall one day reward your virtues.

AN

## AN EPISTLE

TO

## *MR. GESSNER,*

PROFESSOR OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY AND MATHEMATICS AT ZURIC.

1733.

NATURE is again revived! The earth ſhakes off her veil of ſnow, and clothes herſelf in the bright veſtments of ſpring. Come, my friend, let us partake the general gladneſs; away with coldneſs, ſtillneſs, melancholy. Spring, which enlivens the meadows, ſhould alſo enliven our hearts.

Behold the dewy fields covered with wild flowers; the woods reſuming a more brilliant verdure than that which the hand of autumn ſnatched away: the arid plains ſhew the ſweet influence of ſpring; the ſong of gladneſs riſes from every buſh; and ſhall we alone ſhut our hearts to the reception of pleaſure?

Let us forget all ſaddening thoughts. Surely we convert this world into a ſepulchre, when we reject the innocent joys it offers to our acceptance. Ah! if the heart be ſhielded from diſguſt by a purity of taſte and manners, the eyes will open only to be delighted, every ſweet ſound will be at harmony to the feelings.

Let the vulgar ſoul, limited in intelligence, diſtracted by

by vain deſires and imaginary evils, neglect a happineſs he is incapable of taſting; but let the liberal mind expand to the influence of gladneſs, nor ſigh while all nature ſmiles around him.

We are, in truth, all of the ſame race: the philoſopher is but a man: each bears his burden; each has ſufficient weakneſs to tremble at the frowns of deſtiny.

How fooliſh was the arrogance of that ſtoic who abjured humanity and tears before the numerous ſect of Zeno, and, who ſuffering beneath the torments which deſtroyed him, ſtill would maintain that pain was no evil!

But if no human wiſdom can exempt us from the common lot; if the greateſt men muſt yield to it, ſtill we ſhould applaud the courage of the pilot who will never forſake the helm, though the fury of the ſtorm baffle his moſt ſkilful efforts.

Thoſe reproaches which we dare to utter againſt Providence, recoil upon our own folly: Providence is benignant in refuſing our petitions. For ever diſſatisfied with our lot, we crave falſe bleſſings, which, if granted, would only cauſe the bittereſt regrets in future.

The heart can never remain inactive. We ſeek happineſs by means of a deceitful light; and when happineſs fails, like children, we accept the firſt trifle that offers.

Our paſſions caſt a falſe brightneſs upon every object they influence, even as the doubtful glimmering of a lamp will make a fragment of glaſs aſſume the luſtre of a diamond: but the light of philoſophy, like the pure

rays

rays of the ſun, diſcovers the ſmalleſt defects and the moſt concealed beauties.

It is philoſophy which liberates our thoughts; which enables us to appreciate all things according to their real value; which confirms by knowledge our native judgment. It affords enjoyments which depend on ourſelves alone; it ſecures the happineſs of our private life, and teaches us to find within ourſelves inexhauſtible ſources of pleaſure.

All human grandeur would fade before the eyes of an inhabitant of heaven: palaces and cottages would be alike: numerous armies would appear like legions of ants who diſpute a grain of ſand with ridiculous violence.

In like manner, the ſage, who ſtands a calm ſpectator of thoſe things which agitate the multitude, ſmiles at their toilſome exertions, their anxious cares, at the vehemence with which they contend for baubles that, when poſſeſſed, cannot make them happy.

We mix in the crowd only to fly from our own thoughts. Thus acted the firſt of conquerors: he dreaded to look within, leſt he ſhould become hateful to himſelf.

When once the love of truth glows within the ſoul, it tranſports us to heaven: we feel ourſelves dwelling among the gods, even while we remain on earth. The more intimate is our knowledge of truth, the more beautiful will ſhe ever appear, the more forcibly will ſhe attract our deſires, the more delight will ſhe breathe into

into our hearts: Oh, to ſeek her only is ſuperior to all other joy!

O thou whoſe powerful genius takes in at a ſingle glance the vaſt field of more than one ſcience, dear Geſſner, thou wilt find within thy own boſom an inexhauſtible ſource of pleaſure: it flows independent of riches, which can neither ſwell its ſtream nor compenſate for its failure.

Now, following the ſteps of Newton, thou diveſt into the ſecret deſigns of nature: geometry is thy guide, ſhe who alone can reſtrain the imagination and guard it from erring ſteps. Now, examining the conſtruction of the human body, greateſt work of creation, thou diſcovereſt the mechaniſm of its various ſprings, the accelerated or ſlackened motion of the heart, and the weakneſs which at length reſults from it.

O Geſſner, when thou flieſt to ſuccour the unhappy, how powerful is the influence of thy kindneſs! Even as the apparition of Helen's brothers encouraged the diſtreſſed mariners amidſt the horrors of the ſtorm, ſo does thy welcome preſence revive the ſufferers; thou reſtoreſt calm to their beating pulſes, hope to their fainting hearts.

Sometimes thou deſcendeſt into the dewy vales, drawn by the inviting ſmile of Flora, who diſplays her varied robe to thy obſervation: even upon the frozen ſummit of the Alps nature dreſſes for thee a rich parterre beneath her veil of ſnow.

For me, to whom nature has denied the power of attaining

attaining thy lofty flight, I am content to wander among thoſe verdant thickets which ſkirt the foot of Mount Pindus, there to compoſe verſes which may delight thy partial friendſhip.

Ah, did I poſſeſs that forceful genius which has ſecured to the Mantuan bard the admiration of the univerſe, my ſong were worthy of deſcending through ſucceſſive ages; and I would employ it in propoſing that perfect friendſhip which unites thee and Staehlin as an example to remote poſterity.

ON THE

## *APPARENT RECOVERY OF MARIANNE.*

I HAVE beheld death advancing to ſnatch away my beloved: her quick and difficult reſpiration, the anguiſh painted in her expreſſive eyes, oh, with what ſorrow did they wring my heart! My grief, too exquiſite for reſtraint, ſtreamed from my eyes in torrents, and bathed the boſom of Marianne. Trembling with the moſt dreadful apprehenſions, I claſped her in my arms as though I would have ſnatched her from impending fate; and while the deſpair of my ſoul was gilded by a beam of hope*, I raiſed my eager aſking eyes towards Heaven, which thus afflicted me. "Oh, muſt I loſe her?" cried I, "her whom I have ſo fondly and ſo faithfully "loved! Oh, if ſhe were gone, what would remain for "me in the whole creation? Can that being who in-"ſpired and who approves the ſentiments I feel for "her, delight in making them my puniſhment?

"Great God, let my tears prevail! O let thoſe "ſighs which iſſue from the depths of my ſoul draw

* Mr. Haller compoſed this ode at a time when he entertained hopes of his wife's recovery.

"down

" down thy pity on me. Alas, thy wiſdom diſapproves " my eager deſire; thou ſeeſt fit to detach me from a " world in which one object only retains my affections. " O Lord, thy holy decrees are infallible; even in " the boſom of woe I adore them: but thy ears are " open to the ſupplications of thy people; O let me " then obtain that mercy ſo often granted to thoſe " who invoke thee with a pure heart."

The Creator hears our petitions when they are humble and ardent. I prayed, and felt a ſudden hope ſpring up in my benighted ſoul; my intolerable anguiſh ſubſided, and a powerful comforter ſeemed thus to ſpeak within me: " He who yields unreſervedly to the " will of God, and patiently ſuffers the evils which " are inflicted on him, ſhall have his tears wiped away, " and obtain his ſoul's deſire."

I obtained my ſoul's deſire; that man appeared whom God had choſen for an inſtrument of his goodneſs. He looked upon my Marianne, and diſcerned the nature of her malady: he ſtopped its fatal progreſs; I beheld her recover ſtrength and repoſe: returning health began to ſpread over her aſpect; and her eyes, whoſe light was almoſt extinct, again beamed in their well-known ſplendour: her recollection returns; ſhe diſtinguiſhes every one; ſhe again knows her happy huſband.

Merciful Father! when men ſincerely invoke thy goodneſs, thou makeſt them to feel its bleſſed effects. O grant that I may be worthy of that bounty thou

haſt now beſtowed: may it produce in me an increaſe of love, and faith, and obedience towards thee; and when my heart rejoices in my beloved Marianne, O may it alſo be lifted in thankfulneſs to that infinite ſource of Mercy which granted her life to my prayers!

FIRST

## FIRST ODE

### ON THE

## *DEATH OF MARIANNE.*

O MARIANNE, when I attempt to utter a monody to thy beloved obſequies, ſobs ſtifle my voice, and a crowd of tender woeful recollections diſorder all my thoughts. Alas, alas, my happineſs is gone! that happineſs ſo full, ſo entire, ſo ever new, which I enjoyed in thee: oh, I ſhall never feel it more! no, not for one moment in a long long life will ſuch happineſs be mine!

Why do I indulge my ſick heart in lamentation? how dare I to renew thoſe diſmal emotions with which thy death has filled my ſoul? But can I be ſilent, my Marianne? muſt I not ſpeak of thy virtues, of thy beauties, which are ſo deeply engraven on my heart? To do ſo is my only relief, the ſole beam of comfort which illumes my deſpair. Oh, I will ſhut my eyes and bury myſelf in ſtillneſs; I will recall each beautiful inſtance of thy love, each period of our tender and faithful union: thus ſhall I raiſe the faint ſhadow of happineſs, though its ſubſtance be for ever flown.

I ſpeak not from the influence of imagination; I lament not in the ſtudied meaſure of a poet: my heart is heavy with grief; it has loved, and has loſt its treaſure: wholly occupied with itſelf, dead to every thing but its own ſentiments, it flows in my tears, groans in my ſobs, breathes in my verſes.

O Marianne, I now behold thee as in the hour of thy death; I ſee thee recalling thy fainting powers to pronounce a ſingle word which I ſolicited in the phrenſy of my deſpair. Thy ſoul filled with the ſublimeſt ſentiments, ſtill thou didſt partake my ſufferings; thy laſt words breathed love to me; thy laſt movement expreſſed the triumph of reſignation.

Whither ſhall I fly from my grief? Here, every ſurrounding object does but renew its bitterneſs: this houſe where I received thy laſt adieu; this grave where thy aſhes reſt; theſe children—Oh, my heart yearns at beholding theſe tender pledges of thy love: when, in liſping accents, they aſk for their mother—whither ſhall I fly? My Marianne, my love, O that I could fly to thee!

Ah, Marianne, who could mourn for thee ſo juſtly, ſo deeply, ſo conſtantly as thy Haller? He tore thee from thy family, from thy country, and became thy only friend. Every ſplendid advantage, every gay proſpect which thy beauty and thy graces ſeemed to demand from fate, all, all were relinquiſhed for me! Alas, I brought thee from thy home to conduct thee to the tomb!

Can I ever forget the manner of thy parting with a tender

tender and beloved ſiſter? When ſhe had received thy laſt farewell; when every ſtep conveyed us farther from her; when, at length, the very country which held her faded on the view; then, my Marianne, thou didſt turn to me, and exclaim, with a courage ſoftened by ſenſibility, with a tenderneſs that entered my heart, "I go contented; I have nothing to regret, ſince "Haller is with me."

O that day, that bliſsful day which ſhone upon our union! Recollection of the tranſports which ſwelled my heart mingles a deceptive joy with my ſadneſs: but oh, it adds bitterneſs to my regret: what bliſs I once poſſeſſed! never, never ſhall I poſſeſs it more!

How devoted, how generous was thy attachment to me! Thou didſt eſteem the ſentiments of my heart, and forget all diſadvantages of fortune. How unfailing was thy tenderneſs! When I grieved, thy ſighs anſwered mine; and if pleaſure ſhone in my eyes, thy ſweet expreſſive ſmile told me that my pleaſures entered thy heart.

Thy wiſe and elevated mind could ſupport the viciſſitudes of fate, and ſoar above all frivolous deſires; thy temper was delightful ſerenity; thy attentions conſtantly devoted to the education of our children; thy heart was full of ſenſibility, yet free from weakneſs. Indifferent to that general homage which was ever paid to thy charms, thou didſt only deſire to be beautiful in my eyes. And thou wert beautiful in my eyes! all that could ſatisfy, all that could charm, all that could chaſe away grief and give energy to plea-

ſure, ſuch was Marianne to the ſoul of her Haller. And thou wert wholly mine: thoſe delights which exiſted in thy looks, thy ſociety, thy unſpeakable love, all, all were mine, ſolely, ſingly, devoted to me. Oh, how immenſe was my poſſeſſion! how immenſe my loſs!

O Marianne, how I have loved thee—words can never tell how dearly. Doſt not thou remember, that ſometimes when I have folded thee in my arms, a preſentiment of future woe has checked my tranſports, and tears have mingled with our careſſes? "Ah, if I "ſhould ever loſe thee . . . . . ."

That dreaded evil is already come! Time may exhauſt my tears, but my grief will endure for ever: the heart may weep when the eyes ceaſe to flow. The indelible ſtamp of the firſt paſſion which ever entered my heart, the ſweet confeſſion of thy mutual love, my fixed admiration for thy virtues, all, all bind my affections to thy memory with chains that never can be looſened.

O that I could bury myſelf in impenetrable ſhades, where nothing ſhould witneſs my complaints, or interrupt the luxury of my ſorrow! there, in fancy, would I look upon thy beautiful figure, obſerve thy attitude, thy air, thy movement. Oh, I would live again in thoſe happy times when thou haſt ſo tenderly ſighed at my departure; when thou haſt welcomed my return with love and joy, which breathed in thy looks, in thy words, in thy ſweet careſſes.

In the ſilence of night my thoughts follow thee through

through the wide immenſity of the empyrean, and I trace thy bright path among the ſtars. There does thy virtue ſhine in a clothing of celeſtial beauty; there thy ſoul, gifted with new powers, enjoys the fullneſs of its deſires: there doſt thou join in the ſong of the ſeraph, contemplate heavenly things, and adore the Supreme Being; there too doſt thou offer pure ſupplications in favour of thy Haller; and learn, from the ſacred book of deſtiny, the deſign of our ſeparation, and the period of our final re-union.

O excellent and ever beloved ſpirit, if, beneath thy mortal form, thou didſt attract and hold all my affections, how raviſhing muſt thy beauties now appear! I will yield to the tranſporting hope, that, in heaven, thou wilt give thyſelf to him who poſſeſſed thee on earth. My love, my Marianne, look upon me, open thy arms, ſay thou wilt be mine to all eternity! My ſoul flies to meet thee, never, never more to experience ſeparation.

SECOND

## SECOND ODE

ON THE

## *DEATH OF MARIANNE.*

O MY beloved wife, if I may ſtill call thee by that tender name, I know thou art far removed from theſe regions of ſadneſs and affliction; but oh, look down from thy bleſt abode upon the heart of thy faithful huſband! the ſun, clothed in refulgent glory, fixed in his ſplendid courſe, ſtill deigns to ſhed his ray upon this nether world.

Men would perſuade me to forget thee, my Marianne, and to open my heart to leſſer joys: ſuch perſuaſions are equally an inſult to thee and to me: vain are they as inſulting; in the heart which has once poſſeſſed Marianne, her image can never die.

Ye worldly minds, who cenſure my ſorrow, I marvel not at your blindneſs; your dull hearts cannot underſtand my loſs; they have never glowed with the pure

pure and powerful flame of love. How few indeed are acquainted with the nature of true love! True love is not the ſlave of voluptuouſneſs; it is not a blind unruly paſſion; it is created by thoſe beauties moſt congenial to the ſoul; it is maintained and ſanctified by thoſe virtues which the ſoul approves: its acts are full of tenderneſs, devotion, and generoſity; it lives even after death, and partakes the ſoul's immortality. Such is the love of Marianne and Haller.

But Marianne is gone: O thoſe years, thoſe happy years which we have paſſed together, why are they flown ſo ſoon? Oh, that I might but recall thoſe times when adverſe fate frowned upon us! fate itſelf could not make me miſerable while Marianne was mine. Like doves which ſhelter from the rain, we ſought peace in ſweet amuſements; we taſted pleaſure even in the boſom of ſorrow; it was then that we had the ſtrongeſt proofs of the power of our mutual love.

O Berne, O my country, words ſo proper to excite an awful pleaſure, a grief mingled with tenderneſs; flattering image of a reſidence ſo dear, which renews in my heart the traces of its former tranſports, ſtill, ſtill move before my fancy; preſent once more that bliſsful moment when Marianne yielded to me her hand! But vainly do I ſeek theſe ſhadows of pleaſure; the reality of pleaſure is gone; my ſoul is void and lonely: a tomb hides my treaſure; it encloſed her in the prime of her days, while the bloom of youth ſtill animated her features: never, never ſhall I ſee her more;

more: this is the church where ſhe reſts, this the monument where I have engraven my ſorrows. Oh, what horrible ſolitude, what appalling ſtillneſs prevails around! My Marianne, my eternal love, O that in thy ſepulchre I might terminate my woes!

AN

## AN EPISTLE

TO

## *MR. BODNER,*

MEMBER OF THE SOVEREIGN COUNCIL

AT ZURIC.

O THOU, who in the boſom of a foreign land ſtill maintaineſt thy tender friendſhip to me, how canſt thou believe that thy complaints will ſoften my regrets, my profound eternal regrets? Can ſorrow be diminiſhed by hearing of a friend's affliction? No, my dear Bodner: this heart, yet bleeding with its incurable wound, bowed down with habitual ſadneſs, has ſtill the moſt lively compaſſion for thy loſs, has ſtill ſome tears to mingle with thine.

Be it for thoſe whoſe hearts know not ſentiment, to preſerve that independence in their attachments which makes it impoſſible they ſhould taſte any thing but pleaſure in them; be it for ſuch, like the animals, to forget the paſt, be indifferent to the future, and yield unreſervedly to preſent enjoyment: but it is not by the inſtructions of genuine philoſophy that ſuch apathy is attained: philoſophy directs us through thoſe remote

remote forſaken paths which lead to the true ſublime. Beneath her auſpices, thou, O Bodner, haſt, with a noble courage, diſclaimed the vain worſhip of prejudice; thou haſt diſtinguiſhed the genuine ſpirit of poetry from the exterior ornaments of metre and of rhyme; thou haſt unveiled the ſhrine of true glory to the future poets of thy country; a ſhrine on which no offerings ſhall be laid, but thoſe which, like thine, dear Bodner, ſpring from the glowing ſoul of genius: ſuch are alone worthy of the preſiding goddeſs.

O my friend, rich in the higheſt gifts of the intellect and the heart, thy philoſophy reſults from profound and liberal reflection: it is not a pompous covering for apathy and arrogance; it teaches thee not to kill the ſentiments of nature, nor to ſtem thoſe tears which nature impels thee to ſhed. The ſame delicacy of feeling which ſelects with ſuch exquiſite preciſion the beauty of a ſimile or the energy of a th[illegible]ght; which ſympathizes with the tears of Milton, with the fraternal tenderneſs of Joſeph, and with the groans of Philoctetes; it is this very ſentiment, ſo powerful in extracting all the ſweets of pleaſure and all the bitterneſs of pain, which now, my friend, ſharpens thy regret in preſenting with ſuch juſt and lively colouring the full extent of thy loſs. This ſentiment ſhuts up thy heart againſt the influence of vain conſolation; it unveils to thy ſorrowful fancy a boundleſs perſpective of joyleſs days and weariſome nights; it for ever recalls the amiable object of thy grief, all her beloved quali-

ties, all the happy days thou haſt paſſed with her; days which never, never more can return.

O Bodner, how canſt thou ſtill aſk if my grief will endure for ever? Great as is the loſs thou haſt ſuſtained, my loſs exceeds it: ſhall my grief be leſs than equal? I allow that every man beneath the preſſure of ſorrow has a right to think his own lamentations the beſt grounded; for he himſelf is the moſt competent judge of the extent of his ſufferings. But liſten to the ſincere declaration of my heart: I would have reſigned glory, fortune, all the pleaſures of life—yes, even my children, to have redeemed the life of Marianne. O Bodner, grant then to my woe the poor conſolation of thinking myſelf more unfortunate than thou.

For a long time, a child is but a feeble ſhrub clad with a barren foliage; and ſcarcely do we rejoice in its glowing bloſſoms, ere others come to bear away the fruit: its inexperienced heart can make but an inadequate return to our tenderneſs. A wife, on the contrary, who has been devoted to us by her own free choice, is the companion of all our pains and pleaſures: no hopes can enter our boſoms without animating hers; no fears aſſail which ſhe does not participate. The charms of her youth, the fruits of her experience, all are ours; ſhe deſires nothing for herſelf, ſhe exiſts in us No viciſſitudes of fortune can break the ſtrong links of this intimate and tender union: the path of life is ſmoothed by her accompanying footſteps, and our hearts delight in expanding

to her reſearches. If, united to this entire love, nature have gifted her with the charms of beauty, what more, on this ſide heaven, can the heart of man deſire?

Such, O Bodner, was the wife I have loſt; rich in all the graces which could attract my affections, and devoting all hers to me alone. Often, upon the peaceful ſhores of the *Leine*, does her image riſe before my fancy; there does ſhe often liſten to my mournful complaints. Oh, I have beheld that angelic form clad in the ſplendour of immortality; the throbs of my palpitating heart have declared it to be indeed my Marianne, and made me forget the earth: agitated by all the tranſports of grief and of deſire, I have ſprung forward to join her, or to retain her with me; till at length the guſhing flow of my tears has huſhed into tender melancholy the impetuous feelings of my heart.

Can it indeed be that I have poſſeſſed Marianne, and that nothing remains of all my paſt happineſs? O that I might enjoy but one of thoſe looks, but one of thoſe tones ſo well remembered, and which, in the fickly illuſions of love and grief, are ſometimes preſented to my fancy! . . . . . I am ſick of life: years paſs away never to return: to every night ſucceeds another dawn; to every autumn another ſpring: for me, for me alone, there is no longer conſolation; there is no longer my Marianne for me.

My deplorable fate is for ever preſent to me; it occupies my heart, my fancy, my reflections: ſometimes

I think that my calamity was decreed from all eternity; that the death of Marianne, and my joyleſs lonely ſtate, were foretold in the myſterious book of deſtiny. Oh, whether or not my misfortune were eternally decreed, I feel that it has left me void of conſolation. My body ſinks beneath the ſufferings of my mind, and in the ſeaſon of youth it feels the pains and the languors of old age—languors and pains which I ſtill augment by yielding to them. I feel deſpondency of ſoul, and it is an indulgence to nouriſh it: my imagination, overwhelmed with ſadneſs, rejects every ſentiment of pleaſure; my broken heart diſdains to form any hopes or wiſhes; it flies diſguſted from the preſent, recalls the paſt with bitter regret, and trembles at the dreary proſpect of the future.

With Marianne every delight is flown: it was the ſoul-ſatisfying happineſs I enjoyed with her which expanded my powers to receive all other happineſs. How delightful were thoſe hours I devoted to the acquiſition of knowledge; how ſweet thoſe walks through the ſolitary woods, when I have explored the varieties of vegetable nature, thinking all the time of my happineſs and of Marianne! How was my heart gladdened when I have returned to my native country, when I have met thoſe dear friends whoſe kindneſs and congenial taſte were to me ſo valuable a reſource! But, alas, Marianne is gone! that beautiful being who reigned in my ſoul like the ſpirit of bliſs, giving life and expanſion to every joy that entered—ſhe is gone, and joy will never, never more be mine!

Theſe regrets, dear Bodner, purſue me to my ſolitary couch: how many long nights have I paſſed there ſtruggling with my ſorrow, yet almoſt fainting beneath its mighty force! It was in one of theſe terrible moments, when darkneſs and ſolitude ſeemed to add deeper horror to internal gloom, and when griefs roſe like ſpectres before the ſickly fancy—it was then that reaſon lifted up her voice in my heart, and in accents of energy reproached me for the exceſs of my deſpondence.

"O mortal," cried ſhe, "employ not the ſhort "term of thy life in fruitleſs mourning. Thou ſeeſt "every object through a falſe and obſcure medium. "Believeſt thou that thy ſoul was only created for the "purpoſes of its preſent ſtate, or that the period of "human exiſtence may be compared to eternity? Be"hold thoſe ſhining worlds which move above thy "head: they are inhabited by ſpirits infinitely nu"merous, clad in various forms, and placed in various "degrees of glory. All are members of one im"menſe city, in which, perhaps, thou holdeſt but a "ſubordinate rank: yet, raſh mortal, were thy power "equal to thy wiſhes, thou wouldſt draw every thing "to thyſelf as to the common centre, and ſuſpend "the laws of nature for thy own gratification. O "limited in intelligence, yet vaſt in deſire, know that "the very globe thou inhabiteſt is but a ſpeck in the "immenſity of creation, and thou art one being out "of millions and millions that move upon it. Dareſt "thou to expect that the Supreme Being ſhould ſuſ-

"pend

" pend his eternal laws in thy favour? that, to gra-
" tify thy wiſhes, the human body ſhould loſe its ſen-
" ſibility, the fever its ſcorching heat, the poiſon its
" baleful influence? Small indeed art thou in the infi-
" nite ſcale of being, yet the Creator watches over
" thy happineſs, and has deſtined thee to a glorious
" immortality. O yield not then to the ſorrow of a
" moment; for ſuch is the longeſt life to the immenſe
" duration of eternity.

" The firſt man, who was moulded from the clay
" of the earth, and he who died but yeſterday, are
" both flowers of the ſame ſtem, a little ſooner or a
" little later bloſſomed. A whole life paſſed in this
" world of care and pain may be likened to a ſum-
" mer day when the heat of the ſun withers the ſpring-
" ing plants: the dews of the ſucceeding morn revive
" their verdure; ſo ſhall the joys of immortality revive
" the grief-worn hearts of men.

" Thy Marianne now contemplates her union with
" thee as a voyager in ſome ſafe port looks after the
" veſſel which holds his friend, with whom he has
" often experienced the viciſſitudes of the elements.
" Submit to thy inevitable loſs: he whoſe bounty
" gave thee Marianne had a right to recall her to
" himſelf: the purpoſe of her exiſtence could not be
" fulfilled in this lower world.

" Collect the powers of thy ſoul; it was created
" for immeaſurable flights: bound not its eternal de-
" ſtiny to the limits of ſpace, nor appreciate its bliſs
" by the wayward diſpoſition of human lots. Thoſe

" links which bind it to the earth ſhall ſhortly be " looſened. Lift up thine eyes to heaven, from " whence our ſpirits, ſeparated from the duſt of mor- " tality, ſhall one day behold the univerſe unveiled: " our ſenſes ſtrengthened by divine power, our minds " informed by divine intelligence, we ſhall ſuſtain the " bright refulgence of truth, and penetrate her hea- " venly myſteries. Yield not then to the empire of " thy paſſions, but devote thy heart to God, who, in " the ſeaſon appointed by his wiſdom, ſhall conduct " thee to happineſs."

Such, O my friend, are the counſels of reaſon: may I be enabled to follow them!

# *AN ODE*

## ON THE INAUGURATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GOETTINGEN.

1737.

WHENCE ariſe theſe new tranſports of admiration and pleaſure? It is you, beloved Muſes, graces in the train of peace, it is you which ſo delightfully agitate my boſom. This is a day of pure unclouded joy; not like the pompous triumph for ſome cruel victory, which celebrates public deſolation: this day announces ſtill more happineſs than glory.

Behold the light of truth ſpreading over a whole country, till now enveloped in the clouds of error and prejudice. O heavenly beneficent power! I hail thy footſteps; thou doſt regenerate human ſouls: when once we have beheld thy heavenly light, it fixes our gaze for ever.

But what is that lovely group which moves in the radiant path-way between earth and heaven, and upon which thou, O truth, ſheddeſt thy celeſtial ſmile?

Their

Their modeſt graces, that ſweet animation which illuminates their features, their ſports which convey inſtruction, all declare them to be the Muſes. O heavenly maids, deign to inhabit this abode which we conſecrate to you: favour us with thoſe gracious ſmiles which the Athenians formerly obtained, when you made their nation the ſchool of the whole world.

The Muſes hear our petition, and deign to reſt in the habitation we have devoted to them. Thoſe magic ſtrains which hold captive the will, and huſh the ſtormy paſſions . . . Melpomene only could produce them; and behold ſhe reclines in the cypreſs ſhade, and ſweeps with a powerful hand the ſtrings of her golden lyre. Liſten to the inſtructions of Clio, who, from that ivy tower, pours forth her hiſtoric eloquence: liſten to her inſtructions; they are at once a deſcription of paſt, and a prophecy of future events. Behold the ſublime Urania, pale like the riſing moon-beam; her thoughts outſtrip the bounds of ſpace, and aſpire to the myſteries of divinity.

I am loſt in delightful aſtoniſhment! Behold the veil recede which hides future times from our view. This feſtival ſhall again be celebrated by our remote poſterity, and its ſplendour ſtill be reflected upon ages to come. In the deſign of this great day, I foreſee future glory, ſublime geniuſes not yet come into exiſtence. Thus, from the foundation of Athens, it was deſtined that the ſoul of Plato ſhould ariſe there.

The Muſes delight to wander in the regions of ſcience: this temple, where honours wait upon the path of ſcience, where generoſity offers an aſylum to talents oppreſſed by indigence, will be their favourite abode: here ſhall many a ſtrong and ſublime genius unfold his powers; here, ſet free from the anxieties of want, and ſoothed by the influence of leiſure, he ſhall devote to the inveſtigation of truth the precious hours of each ſucceeding day.

It is yours, O Muſes, it is yours to tranſmit to poſterity the name of your protector. When time ſhall have obliterated the inſcriptions engraven upon marble, your records will declare the name of him who founded your ſanctuary: you ſhall diſplay before the kings of the earth a model worthy of their imitation, a monarch whom God armed with his power in order to make him an inſtrument of his goodneſs.

Tune not your lyres to celebrate the glory of England, a country ſo fruitful in heroes; nor mingle in your ſongs the renown of the Guelfes, and the recital of their various battles: ſuch borrowed praiſes make not the true glory of a hero: let the *merits* of George be deſcribed in his eulogium: it is true that his ſceptre is a gift of Providence, but to himſelf we owe the uſe that he makes of it.

Ye Muſes, celebrate that unſhaken firmneſs which is at once the terror of the oppreſſor, and the ſafeguard of powerleſs innocence: it is this quality which ſhall ſecure peace and abundance to ſo many nations.

nations. George, armed with ſtrength and valour, will ever prefer an equitable peace to a certain victory, and the happineſs of his ſubjects to the ſplendour of conqueſt. His ſoul is lifted even above ambition, that quality which ſo often ſubdues the firmneſs of heroes.

Ye Muſes, celebrate that ſublime penetration which diſtinguiſhes every object of public welfare; which reſpects greatneſs only when adorned by good actions, and eſteems wonders only when they are uſeful.

George extends his beneficent cares beyond the limits of our continent: worthy of preſiding over two worlds, he conſtitutes the happineſs of a new hemiſphere. Savage nations are taught to acknowledge the ſocial virtues and the obligations of morality; uſeleſs foreſts give place to flouriſhing cities. Happy the lot of America, which improves beneath the cares of her diſtant ſovereign; but far happier Europe, which enjoys the preſence of him who can ſo powerfully contribute to her felicity, and who uſes his power ſo well.

Doubtleſs the homage of the Muſes will be accepted by that vaſt genius who watches over the happineſs of ſo many ſtates: his bounty has devoted to the Muſes this ſolemnity. Thoſe who dwell upon the peaceful ſhores of the Leine, and are witneſſes of this new feſtival, a feſtival which none of them ſhall again behold; all thoſe, O George! unite their voices, and pray that their days may be cut ſhort to lengthen thine, that ſo thou mighteſt be preſerved for a bleſſing to their deſcendants.

It is yours, O Muſes, to celebrate the founder of the temple deſtined for your abode: if a mortal dare undertake the adventurous ſong, inſpire him with the zeal of Haller, and the ſublimity of Virgil. Melpomene, your ſoft and flowing ſtrains accord with theſe days of peace, when the hero of your theme ſhines only as the father of his people. At ſome future period, when George, forced to evince his powers in combat, ſhall ſpread the banners of conqueſt over land and ſea, then be it yours, Calliope, to ſing his victories to your loud-ſounding harp.

THE END.